

台灣路竹會
Taiwan Root Medical Peace Corps



TAIWAN ROOT MEDICAL PEACE CORPS

Bilingual Periodical

台灣路竹會

第十六期 雙語會刊
2009 AUGUST

NICE TO MEET YOU, TRMPC!

THE PEOPLE AFTER WAR - A TRIP TO CHALLENGE OUR MINDS !

A MEDICAL MISSION THROUGH MY LENSES

VOLUNTEER WITH A CHEERFUL HEART

THE SHEER HAPPINESS OF GIVING



我們可以在任何事中發現，付出的努力在某個時間軸上，展現出報酬曲線。參與路竹會服務，我們在意的曲線，是純樸人們臉上的一抹微笑。

攝影：廖玉惠

本期要目 *Contents*

會長的話	1
醫療無國界 很高興認識你，路竹會。	2
醫療日誌 戰火後的人民 一場鬥智競賽的義診服務	4
志工特寫 用我的鏡頭看義診.....	6
路竹足跡 志工快樂行	7
原鄉紀行 單純付出的快樂	8
期待您的加入 讓感動由您啟動.....	9
Message of TRMPC	11
Nice to Meet You, TRMPC!.....	12
The People after War – a trip to challenge our minds!	14
A Medical Mission through My Lenses	16
Volunteer with A Cheerful Heart	17
The Sheer Happiness of Giving.....	19
Grant yourself a chance to give, take actions and join the team today!	20



路竹雙語會刊 第十六期

TAIWAN ROOT MEDICAL PEACE CORPS

中華民國89年7月7日創刊

中華民國98年8月18日出刊

榮譽發行人：劉兆豐

發行人：劉啟群

出版：台灣路竹會

會址：台北縣新店市231中正路四維巷八弄一號五樓

電話：+886-2-86676700

網址：www.taiwanroot.org

總編輯：程哲仁

文編：黃珍吾 曾麗容

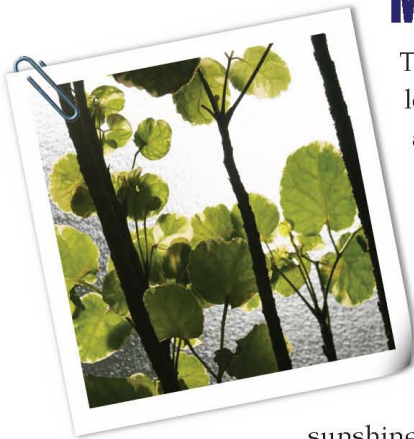
設計：曾麗容

傳真：+886-2-86676116

電郵：tradm@taiwanroot.org



Message of TRMPC



The afternoon sunshine radiates through the panes and surrounds the green leaves. Staring at the green reflection, summer heat seems more tolerable all of a sudden. This scenario reminds me of Hawaii, our last day of the trip to Central America with President Ma last month. I woke up early to witness the sunrise in a bayview restaurant, where I met Minister Mao of Transportations and Communications, and shared some of my views with him in the quiet morning sunlight.

Western Taiwan is the hub for business and industries, and eastern part has great potentials to become a world-class tourist attraction. From the Suao Hualien Highway and all the way to Kenting, the beautiful sunshine, fresh air, azure skies, breathtaking mountains, the diverse aboriginal cultures and the well-preserved environment, all of them are gifts from the Mother Nature. Despite the voice of the public urging for conservational acts, the government has not yet established a proposal plan. I wish we could be rejuvenated by the Eastern scenery after being worn out from the “Western hustle and bustle”.

As a matter of fact, Taipei City also has some remarkable conditions among the worlds’ top metropolitans—it all depends on how we utilize these conditions. For example, we can build a tower on the roundabout intersected by Jen Ai and Dun Hua S Road with the most prestigious restaurant, hotel and convention center which everyone will be proud of. We can also map out a SoHo district on the Jen Ai Dun Hua area by making the traffic underground and then combining it with the 101 Xinyi district. The result will lead us to a strikingly revolutionary Taipei that dazzles the world.

Last but not least, Dubai has become the center of attention not only because of the economical revenue brought by petroleum, but also because of the original architectures within the city of Dubai. If the Taiwanese government can establish a prize for the most innovative architectures in different parts of Taiwan, and whoever wins prize are exempt from taxation, it surely will give us a stunning outcome. Maybe in another ten or twenty years, Taiwan will become the “Center of the Architectural Arts” of the world!

Liu Chin-chun
President of Taiwan Root Medical Peace Corps
24.July.2009

台灣路竹會
Taiwan Root Medical Peace Corps



Taiwan Root Medical Peace Corps (TRMPC) is a private, non-sectarian, non-profit organization dedicated to improving quality of life through provision of medical services and health education. Founded in 1995, by the vision of Dr. Chi-Chun Liu, TRMPC joined talented medical personnel with enthusiastic volunteers to form a medical service group. In nearly 200 medical missions, TRMPC focuses on bringing medical care to not only indigenous populations inhabiting remote mountain areas of Taiwan, but to people in developing nations and in refugee camps. The number of people we served amounts to 100,000. TRMPC believes that medical service should transcend national borders and exceed the limitations of politics, race, and religion. It holds as its end goal a united international community working in cooperation to bring about equitable access of healthcare to all populations.



Nice to Meet You, TRMPC!

Text and photos by Wang Yu-jen (王昱仁)

Translated by Kelly Her (何佳珊)

For me and many friends around, the voluntary medical service or humanitarian relief is a myth or an unreachable ideal. It happened that I had a chance to go with my mother, a retired nurse, to join the TRMPC for an international medical mission to Vietnam and Laos. This trip changed my stereotype about the voluntary medical service in that it turned out to be one type of traveling, or say, another way of living for me. It was significant not only for all the participating medical workers and volunteers but also for local people that received our free medical services.

I'd been to many countries, but did not have such a true, profound experience like this one. In the course of the clinic services, the sincere smiles that local people showed on their faces and their expression of gratitude to us were all new to me. Earlier when being on the plane, I was thinking as a non-medical volunteer, what kind of help that I could offer? Apart from employing my photographic skills that I had not practiced for quite some time to help take some photos and my

physical strength to help loading and unloading equipment, I was afraid that I might not be of much help. I thus took on this task with extreme caution and uneasiness. Other senior volunteers including uncle Teng and aunt Zhenzhen told me that as long as we could do our work well and with pleasure, then we would not come in vain. After a few days of cooperating with others, I seemed to have changed my mindset of considering it as an 'assignment' and discovered that the unpaid work could make me feel so happy.

It was a very interesting experience to work with the TRMPC. Every time when we arrived at a new site, the president would first look around and then divide the area into different sections, including registration, dental, internal medicine, medical examination and pharmacy. Consequently, without referring to the so-called 'standard operating procedure' (SOP) and no orders from anyone, all the equipment were soon unloaded and put at the designated places, and medical services started instantly. The biggest challenge should be 'people.'


The huge crowd that sought medical services and the language barriers indeed affected the flow of our providing of clinic services. Oftentimes, we found locals (Vietnamese) were jammed at the front door of the medical rooms and the crowded scene could be assimilated to a riot. Thus, to classify the patients based on their symptoms and guide them to line up to wait for the medical service was not an easy task. At times, we would have to use 'force' to maintain a good order. I often found myself completely exhausted by the end of the day. On the other hand, it was not easy for our patients as well. Some people brought all their families there by walking for several hours starting from the early morning. Among them, there were sick elders and children that had to wait in the long line after making registration. One time, a sick child whose lips turned pale fell down right at my feet. He was immediately taken to the room to receive an intravenous (IV) drip. Later on, I was told that many people did not eat anything before coming to our medical stations and some of them that did not get the chance to see the doctor in the morning would continue to wait under the scorching sun in the hope of seeing a doctor eventually. The TRMPC's arrival brought much hope to local people. How could we let them down? The thought of it motivated me to offer as much help as I could to the medical team. Sometimes, I liked to stand in front of the dental clinic as there were always some interesting, yet 'tearful' scenes to watch. And





I found some patients waiting outside felt amused too. Still, I had to suppress my smile and appear serious in dispersing those children that were curious at looking what's going on in the medical room, fearing that they might get hurt by our tools and equipment. President Liu, who is a dentist, often asked me to take those children waiting for the medical service to go for a checkup first. Dr. Chang, the most senior member of the medical team, examined and inquired about patients in details even in the face of long queues of waiting patients. There was one girl having the mentally retarded symptom due to her contraction of a high fever when she was little. Dr. Chang offered explanation to the girl's mother with patience. At the same time, the girl was seen to keep her fingers crossed. Was she praying, blessing or thankful? I could only hope our following medical services would not come too late. There were always a lot of people waiting for our medical services and their number often exceeded the timeframe that we'd previously scheduled. Still, Dr. Chang

insisted that we screened the rest of the medical records and singled out those who really needed the medical examination. As to the ones that asked for drugs, we would still give them what they requested. Now that we went there from far away, we should try to do a good job regardless. After a busy working day, we had a big dinner, though it might not be very delicious, I must say and could drink beer to our heart's content, then sitting on the balcony of our apartment, having a good chat with one another and enjoying the breeze and the beautiful moonlight of the summer night. And no need to pray before eating or going to bed. Also, we had chances to go for a mountain hike, visit a traditional wet market and jump off the aged, suffocating bus to enjoy the tasty watermelon on the roadside. No matter how restrained, awful the environment was, we could always set ourselves free as long as we intended to do that. During the meal, Dr. Kuan asked me why I came to join the medical service. I answered him without hesitation: 'Because it was in-

teresting!' After a few days' hard work, I still could not find a better answer. Nevertheless, it was already a great honor for a volunteer to work with a professional, enthusiastic medical team. Taiwan has witnessed booming economic development for the last five decades. However, I believe that the real miracle will just start to take place. As the phrase shown on the cap of the TRMPC: 'Time for TAIWAN Feedbacking its LOVE FOR THE WORLD,' there was a group of volunteers spending their time and money and making great efforts to helping people overseas. The completion of this voluntary medical service was merely one little anecdote among thousands of touching, intriguing stories of such kind. The concept of the equitable distribution of medical resources has been endowed with a great vision. We could always get something in reward for our hard work in any business operation system. But here what we really cared about was the happy smiles that the local people showed after receiving our medical services! 



The People after War – a trip to challenge our minds!

Text Lu Kuei-Yun(呂桂雲)

Translated by Cynthia Huang(黃星毓)

Photos by Wang Yu-jen(王昱仁) and Liao Yu-Hui(廖玉惠)

Spinning the globe tellurian around, we landed in Vietnam and Laos. Following the trips to Ladakh, India and Ecuador in South America, this is my third time going abroad with Taiwan Root for a medical mission. The trip lasted for nine days, beginning from Laos and riding southward into Vietnam.

A tribulation of time and perspiration

The site for every medical mission is always the furthest and most deprived places of all. Therefore, as one of the features of Taiwan Root, we would always be spending a lot of time on the road. In the span of nine scheduled days, we spent half of the time travelling either by flight or by car. And to maximize the time left for serving the people, we started our service at daybreak, finished at dusk and headed for the next site at night so that we could start again on time the next morning. In addition to the group members, there were more than

30 cases of medical equipments and medications fleeting swiftly in between leaves and branches in the dark. There were two nights that we had to gobble down our dinner on the awfully bumpy car ride, just like meal time on the airplane in the turbulence where keeping things in place is hardly possible. Nevertheless, everyone was still keeping their spirits up despite of the distress—why not just eat and drink less to avoid the troubles of stopping for bathroom breaks? After riding for the first few days, everyone noticed that the actual traveling time was always twice as long as the expected time. Just like the first night, we were supposed to arrive at the next site in four hours, but in reality, we drove for eight hours and arrived at the lodging at 5 am in the morning! Hence, the proper amount of food and water intake is necessary.

The most challenging thing for me was the weather in Vietnam. According to the travelling books, the climate in Vietnam is similar to the one in Taiwan categorized

as tropical and subtropical climate. It might have the same temperatures as Taiwan, however it felt completely different by making any moisture in your body evaporate in a bizarre manner—you got to sweat and detoxify at the same time!

After working for just ten minutes, all of our clothings were all soaking wet by our sweat. Hence we really had to be aware and not let ourselves dehydrate by drinking lots of water. Strangely, you would not feel like urinating even after a lot of water intake. But when the work was done and we could finally relax to drink and urinate at normal, the urine had become brown resulting from dehydration. This scenario reminded me that during the Vietnam War some thirty years back, the American soldiers had to fight the war under this extreme condition and topography, which left no surprise that victory was not on their side.

A trial of our mind in addition to the mission

Through the medical missions, we can always have a better understanding of the local people compared with the general tourists. It made me realize how gentle, genuine, polite and orderly the people in Laos were when we were working in Vietnam. Perhaps because of the lack of education under the numerous war fires, people in Vietnam just could not wait orderly until they were called. Everyone tried to sneak into the treating room in every possible way: some moved step by step squatting; some just walked in blatantly as if they were the government officials; some





kept repeating their symptoms to beg for sympathy; the others just jammed straight into the room. Even if the staff had explained the rules loud and clear over and over again, and had them take a seat to wait, they still could not follow the orders and continued to sneak in at every cost. As a nurse for the treating room, I had suddenly become a door keeper all of a sudden who had to try stopping them by any means. Each of them seemed to have his own methods to survive; I wonder if a history full of war fire destructions had caused these distinct cultural traits.

The aftermath of Vietnam War haunts the people until this day

Among the patients we treated, a lot of them were kids with cerebral palsy, hydrocephalus and bronchocele. The doctors would pay extra care to those patients with unusual diseases and determine whether they were caused by Agent Orange and dioxin used by the US army

during the Vietnam War. Agent Orange is an herbicide and defoliant given its name from the color of the orange-striped barrels it was shipped in. The US military sprayed Agent Orange in South Vietnam as part of a defoliant program. The objective was to reduce the dense jungle foliage so that Communist forces might not use it for cover and to deny them use of crops needed for subsistence, and then destroyed the area by dropping bombs from the B-52 bomber. The Vietnam War had been over for more than 30 years, but the damages still exist and haunt the people until today. The toxins soaked into the soil over time, and contaminated the water source. By consuming the contaminated water, women gave births to over 500,000 children with birth defects. The medical mission would not have been possible without the participation of everyone. From the administrative staff who arranged everything, to our team leader, President Liu, to the doctors and the volunteers, everyone was equally important with great

efforts. Lastly, with the help of the local Taiwanese association, we were able to carry out this mission successfully. Being in a country with a totally different language and culture, we relied heavily on the translators sent by the Taiwanese association. The translators needed to be very competent because only through their patience and proper translation were we able to accomplish our goal by spreading our love to the patients into different countries. ✧





A Medical Mission through My Lenses

Text Jen Chien-Ming (甄健明)

Translated by Hellen Chiao (喬樺) Photos by Liao Yu-Hui (廖玉惠)

I am new to Taiwan Root Medical Peace Corps. During the months of April and May this year, I was making a documentary of Outstanding Alumni for Taipei Medical University. Fortunately, I met the founder of TRMPC, Dr. Liu, and therefore learned more about the organization. I was deeply touched by the generosity and the altruistic nature of the organization, so I wanted to join a mission. I was hoping to use my expertise, photography, to record the journey.

I discussed my ideas with Dr. Liu, and was strongly encouraged by him. My first mission with TRMPC was to Laos and Vietnam from June 6th to June 14th. My main responsibility was to take photos, but when needed, I also helped with triage, labs, and transportation of medical supplies.

On the morning of June 6th at 5:30am, the volunteers gathered at Taoyuan International Airport getting ready to check in. The volunteers came from all over, wearing neat uniforms with simple luggage, and they seemed

like a well trained medical troop. After everyone introduced themselves, we all worked together efficiently to move the medical supplies which filled at least thirty cases.

Our first stop was Laos. Laos depends heavily on agriculture, and the economy and supplies are very inadequate. Although many lived in poverty, Lao often led very optimistic and simple lives. Most people who came to see the TRMPC doctors have never been to a doctor before; therefore, there were many patients with cavities due to a lack of knowledge regarding oral hygiene.

During the mission, there were two particular cases that stood vividly in my mind. First was a woman with breast cancer. Her breasts were festering, but due to a lack of resource, she could not obtain proper medical care. The TRMPC team cleaned and medicated her wound temporarily and told her that she needed surgery to remove her cancerous breasts. The other case was a girl with fever and a swollen stomach. The

doctor prepared an IV and told the mother that her daughter needed to go to a hospital which could offer her more resources. The mother sadly explained that they could not even afford to travel to the nearest hospital, let alone

be seen by a doctor. The father works hard to support the family, but making it to the hospital would leave them without any money for at least two months. Again, this was another silent yet desperate fight against death.

Our second stop was Vietnam, and the people also lived in overwhelming poverty. Due to years of war, various chemical weapons left many children with developmental defects and hydrocephalus. All TRMPC volunteers could do was to relieve their symptoms and to educate the parents on the care of their medically needy children. After seeing the terrible aftermath of wars, we all prayed for world peace, hoping the scars of wars not be carried on generation after generation.

This mission was physically and emotionally demanding, but no one complained throughout the journey. Seeing the patients' heart-felt smiles and appreciation, I know all the hard work was worth it. After I got home, my wife washed my khaki uniforms, which were all practically a different color due to repeated sun exposure and my profuse sweat over the nine-day mission. I thought, I must have not sweat this much in four months at home in Taipei, compared to a nine-day mission in Laos and Vietnam! In the fond memory of this mission, our team decided to name the documentary "Happiest Perspiration!"





Volunteer with a Cheerful Heart

Text Wang Siou-Miao(王秀妙)

Translated by Cynthia Huang(黃星毓) Photos by Jian Mei-guei(簡美桂)

My first overseas trip after joining Taiwan Root was to the Philippines, which happened years ago. I realized how fortunate I was to be living in Taiwan where we have everything after visiting the city of Manila, which was dirty and full of the sick and the poor. As a volunteer, I was able to provide my help first-handedly with a variety of medical resources provided by Taiwan Root. Not only did we help the local patients, we also improved the diplomacy between the two countries. It was my first time realizing the happiness and pride of being a volunteer.

As for the missions within Taiwan, they were all scheduled for the rural aboriginal villages, or places that lack medical resources from the government. By going to these places, I witnessed with my own eyes the big gap between the urban and the rural regions. The people living in the city are so wasteful to a point where foods, usable goods and many other things are thrown away. Through the medical mission from Taiwan root, I was able to go deep into the lifestyle of the aboriginal society, and learned to appreciate and to be content with what I already have. Therefore, I try to go to every mission whenever I had a chance. Nevertheless, I still regret for not being able to go more often. Also, it is getting more difficult to be on the

team due to the growing numbers of Taiwan Rooters. So please do apply as early as possible to be considered!

On the 16th and 17th of May, I have finally took a step and joined my first mission of the year to Alishan. As usual, everybody met up in front of the National Taiwan University. I greeted everyone with a long-time-no-see, and the volunteer drivers said that it was all because of my absence from the mission since they met every month. I suddenly felt a rush of emotion and embarrassment because they have been to every mission for years without any complaints. I pay genuine respect and appreciation to our volunteer driving team since they did not volunteer because they have money and time, they volunteered because they have love in the hearts and make time from their busy schedule. Even if they have their own family and busi-

ness to be responsible for, they still devote themselves to Taiwan Root and deliver all of team member safely to places in every medical missions. I respect them from the bottom of my heart.

When we were at the aboriginal villages, most of the villagers we saw were the seniors and the youngsters because all of the grown-ups were out there to make a living. Therefore, grandparenting has become necessary. Among the senior patients, most of them had degenerative joints, hypertension, hepatitis C and they have not been taking medications as they should. Nevertheless, they never complained anything about the lack of medical resources when we talked to them. As for the kids, most of them had a lot of cavities due to the lack of oral health education. It made me reflect on the fact that even though we have national health insurance in our society,





the aboriginal tribes have become the minorities due to its inconvenient location and the lack of medical care from the government. Even though through the medical missions from Taiwan Root, they are able to obtain immediate relief, yet we are only

able to visit the same place about once every six months. We hope that by emphasizing on health education, they are able to better care for themselves and seek for professional help in a timely manner. The fourth place during this trip is at a non-aboriginal village,

where the chief officials were very supportive about the idea and encouraged the villagers to get treated. They even proactively proposed to have health education lectures, which made me feel optimistic for them. Prevention is always better than cure, a healthy lifestyle is the best way to stay healthy.

Through volunteering in the Taiwan Root medical missions, the sincerity and appreciation of the patients and the passion of the other volunteers cheered me the most. I thank President Liu for leading us Taiwan Rooters so that I am able help with my expertise. I look forward to the more improved medical missions in the future for the health of the minorities. ✚

Welcome to Our TRMPC Website www.taiwanroot.org
we record nearly 200 medical missions so far on our website, and there are plenty of photos and vedio clips kept completely about our mission. Welcome to browse it.



The Sheer Happiness of Giving

Text Shen Chao-chan(沈昭嬋)

Translated by Kathy Jiang(江愷苓) Photos by Hellen Chiao(喬樺)

The 3-Day Medical Service Trip of the Taiwan Root Medical Peace Corps started on June 26th, 2009. After the trip, despite exhaustion, I found the experience extremely fulfilling. Though my contribution as a kitchen helper was trivial, the medical service trip was indeed an eye-opening experience. I didn't know there was such an organization that has been doing so much to serve those in need. Also, I was amazed at the number of people willing to sacrifice their leisure time in order to serve the indigenous tribes. All the volunteer drivers, medical teams, kitchen helpers that worked together to make this trip possible. To be honest, I wasn't really that much of a help on this trip. Without any medical or culinary expertise, I was worried that I would even cause trouble for others. But knowing that my help in the kitchen actually served the volunteer drivers who brought us all the way up the mountain, as well as the medical workers who were working on the front line, turned out to be extremely gratifying. These medical trips often received many volunteer sign-ups and as a result, not all volunteers get to participate. I didn't participate in such meaningful activities very often because of limited sign-up quotas and personal reasons, which is a pity. But it's great to know that so many kind and giv-

ing people exist in the world. What impressed me most in the Taiwan Root Medical Peace Corps is that every participant is very appreciative of one another. A driver once said to the chef Amei and kitchen helpers: "Thank you so much! Cooking for so many people isn't easy work!" Amei replied with a gentle smile: "You are the ones to be thanked. You have driven us up the winding roads to this mountain village. Without your help, we wouldn't even be here cooking. We should thank you instead. Please eat as much as you can after we finish cooking." Such dialogue led me to truly believe that all participants here are grateful to one another and that everyone came here to serve without asking for anything in return. This spirit, in my mind, is essential for volunteer work. I've been wondering why indigenous people in mountain areas can't enjoy the conveniences of big cities. I guess all industries including the medical industry are subject to cost and operational pressures. That is why there are so few resources in the mountain areas. The help offered by Taiwan Root Medical Peace Corps or similar groups may be limited, yet I believe the point is to try to relieve as much pain as possible. If we can prevent a disease or pain from worsening, it's already more than worth it. It occurs to



me that I, not the residents, was the one who benefited most from the medical service trip. The trip gave me the opportunity to step back from daily routines of city life and to learn how to give. The sheer happiness of giving is beyond description. Only by experiencing it can one truly feel it. I'm grateful to Taiwan Root Medical Peace Corps for its admirable persistence in holding free medical service trips. This is the first time I participated in their trips. I have promised myself to continue volunteering and hopefully more experience will help me become truly capable of serving and helping others. ✦



Grant yourself a chance to give, take actions and join the team today!

If you have been acting as a spectator, you will eventually find yourself in a place where things are getting less interesting as time goes by. You do not need to be a medical professional to be on our team, we sincerely welcome you to join our Taiwan Root Medical Missions. At the same time, Taiwan Root Medical Peace Corps also welcome donations including funds, medications, nutritional supplement and other forms of collaboration and supporting projects.

Join Us

Please find the detailed schedule, volunteers and resources needed on the official Taiwan Root website www.taiwanroot.org. And please fill out an application online, or send it via email or fax.

Volunteers we are looking for:

Medical professional volunteers -

Physicians, dentists, nurses, medical technicians and pharmacists

General volunteers -

Kitchen works, resources distribution, field research, registration, transportation, moving, paper works, translation for foreign missions and periodicals (English and other languages).

Donate to Us

One-time fund donation -

please transfer the donated funds to our Chunghwa Post account. Account name: Taiwanroot Medical Peace Corps. Account number: 19487090. We will issue receipt of donation for tax reduction purpose.

Recurring credit card donation -

Please fill out the credit card form from our official website, or contact us for a faxed credit card form. We will issue receipt of donation for tax reduction purpose.

Medical equipments and medications -

We need various of medical equipments, supplies and medications. Your donations will be organized and used for domestic and foreign medical missions.

Personal and household goods -

Goods including commonly used items, cans, dry foods and etc. We will bring cases full of your love to the rural area and distribute them to the ones in need.



Address: 5F, No. 1. Alley 8, Sihwei Lane, Chungchen Rd., Sindian City, Taipei County, R.O.C.

Tel: +886-2-86676700 Fax: +886-2-86676116 Website: www.taiwanroot.org E-mail: tradm@taiwanroot.org