

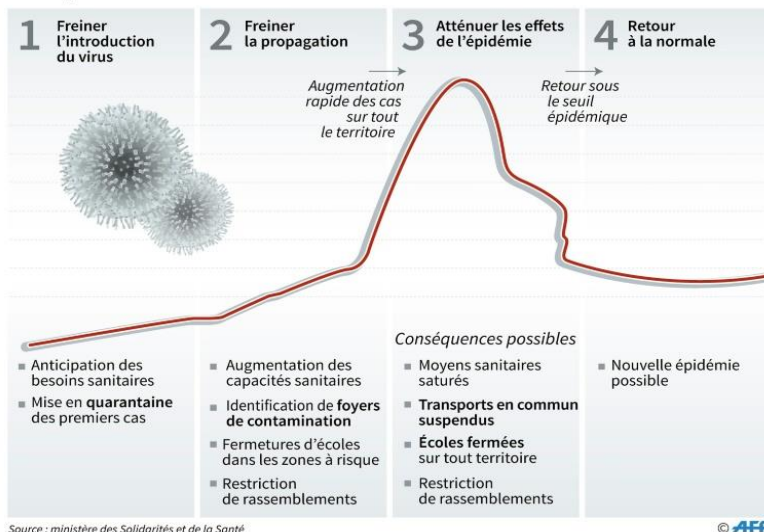


From 21 to 25 October 2019, the Yellow River Conservation Commission (YRCC) participated in the organization of the 9th International Session of Initiatives for the Future of Great Rivers (IFGR) which took place in Beijing and Zhengzhou, China. The Rivers Committee, of which Yangbo Sun is a member, was able to exchange on the Chinese experience in the management of the Yellow River and water resources in general.

A few weeks after this session, China experienced its first cases of COVID-19. Yangbo Sun is pleased to report on the measures put in place by the Chinese government and the first lessons it has learned from this health crisis.

How is the situation going in China, especially the Zhengzhou city?

Les quatre stades de lutte contre le Covid-19



On March 11 2020, the World Health Organization declared the Covid-19 corona virus a pandemic, and the battle against the virus is all over the world now. In the course of fighting the Covid-19 outbreak in China, we have just went through the three stages* of outbreak, stabilizing and recovery, and managed to bring the epidemic under control in two month time.

***The 4 stages of the fight against Covid-19** : Stage 1 : curbing the introduction of the virus into the country / Stage 2 : stopping the spread / Stage 3 : mitigating the effects of the epidemic / Stage 4 : returning to normal

The virus outbreak escalated in January just before the Chinese lunar New Year, which is also the biggest travel holiday of the year, usually there will be more than 2 billion trips for family reunion and holidays in China during this period. Observing how fast and how far the

virus can spread, China moved quickly to isolate the affected areas and prevent movement of the virus.

Most of the domestic flights and trains have been cancelled, and internal travel was halted as well. The city of Wuhan had been placed

Interview with Yangbo Sun, April 6th, 2020.

Director of International Cooperation of the Yellow River Conservancy Commission (YRCC)

under lockdown, and the quarantined areas were expanded rapidly as the disease progressed.

At the mean time, Chinese Doctors were struggling to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the newly discovered virus, track the infection source, find and quarantine all confirmed and suspected cases, try to save every patient. More than 40,000 Medical staff from different provinces of China poured into the locked Hubei province to fight the virus, among them there is a 20 person Medical Squad from the Yellow River Hospital, they were assigned to take care of the patients in the cabin hospital in Wuhan. After the most difficult time in January and early February, the virus spreading began to slow down. For the Zhengzhou city where I lived and YRCC located, the latest COVID-19 incidence observed was on Feb 20th, and the total number infected was stopped at 157 incidences one month ago.

Faced with the enormous, completely unexpected and rapidly evolving crisis, Yellow River Conservancy Commission put the safety of its 40000 staff into the highest priority. At very early stage, YRCC started to inform the daily epidemic situation to each individual staff and setup health record for them to trace their location and health condition, and provide necessary support if needed. After the holiday, YRCC allow only necessary and limited staff return to office, and encourage most of the staff working at home through video/audio conference. Early spring usually bring Yellow River the ice melting floods in the upper reach and the water demand for Irrigation and environment in the lower reach, this year YRCC put the flood prevention and water allocation stakeholder consultation meeting online and allocate the water resources by the remote control center, which also works quite well. **Today, the YRCC office has already returned to normal business, but fighting COVID-19 is not over, it is still encouraged to wear face mask and to avoid public gathering and travel.**



Reinforcement of the medical teams of the Yellow River Conservation Commission in Wuhan

What are the lessons learned from the epidemic?

Two month later after the outbreak, China is now working to bolster its economy and return to a more normal semblance of its society. China's experience shows that even before the Coronavirus can be vaccinated , it is still possible to be contained, and the lessons learned might be :

1. **In the face of this common threat, only the coordinated and collective action** makes the virus containment measures possible. As a national approach, the hardhit Hubei province (60 million people) and Wuhan city (12 million people) was strictly shut down immediately after the outbreak, specific containment measures were adjusted to all the other provinces, county and even community level. At the individual level, hundreds million of people accepted the month-long stay at home advisories or prohibitions on travel and public gatherings, as well as universal temperature monitoring, masking, and hand washing. Besides, the central government led the other provinces to send thousands of health care workers and tons of vital PPE supplies into Hubei province and Wuhan city, which reflected a remarkable solidarity of provinces and cities in support of the most vulnerable populations and communities. That also reminds me a lot

regarding how we fight the Yellow River Floods in the history, very similar strategy and methodology was used.



YRCC medical staff is coming back from Wuhan town

2. **Knowledge sharing is extremely important.** As the scientists and public health experts fighting the unknown virus, the knowledge has also emerged related to isolate the causative virus, establish diagnostic tools, and determine the route of spread and incubation period, which provided the vital evidence base for China's strategy. The Chinese Protocol for Prevention and Control of COVID-19 have been updated six times in two month, and there is also an online knowledge center set up by China National Health Commission, which might be very useful for the battle against the virus.

3. **New technology was essential to a 'no contact' life and work style.** 5G technology play an

important role in this battle, the AliPay developed a Personal Health Code system and widely used in China, the QR code could be used as access code to office, shops and public transportation, it will trace the travel route and location as well as quarantine situation, only the Green code holders are allowed to travel. Besides, video conference, online courses, Taobao helped the people who stay home to continue their life and work, with sufficient food and service supply. My daughter has been attend the online primary school for one month, I think she has got used to it and will like it.

Last but not least, although China confronted with the virus earlier and start to return to a normal semblance earlier,

« it was said the end of the COVID19 pandemic is not determined by the first few countries who contained the virus, »

but by the last few country who defeat the virus, only at that time we are all safe, and we hope China's experience send a signal of the light at the end of the tunnel.



Translation of the banners:

« Welcome our hero(yellow river medicals) home with glorywon the anti-epidemic fight in Wuhan! »