

Media Release

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Australian businesses team up to rebuild earthquake damaged Sichuan school

A Sichuan school badly damaged in last year's earthquake in Western China was officially reopened today after a re-building project supported by ANZ, BlueScope Steel and Allens Arthur Robinson.

The Australian businesses partnered with the Mianyang Government to rebuild the classrooms at Yangjia Middle School in Mianyang City, Sichuan Province to China's highest safety standards.

The project resulted in the building of six new classrooms for up to 300 students at the Yangjia Middle School and helped develop new knowledge and skills about high-quality building techniques among local construction workers.

Now known as the ANZ Building, the classrooms were built with quality, recyclable, new materials including Australian steel and have been designed to withstand earthquakes of magnitude eight.

Yangjia Middle School children and teachers participated in today's opening ceremony which was attended by the Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party Fucheng District Mr Xi Shihong, the Australian Ambassador to China Dr Geoff Raby, ANZ Chief Executive Officer Mike Smith, BlueScope Lysaght China President Tim Lefebvre (representing BlueScope Steel) and Allens Arthur Robinson Partner Seamus Cornelius.

The partnership saw ANZ donate RMB1 million (A\$190,000) to fund the project; BlueScope Steel supplied the building materials and oversaw construction; the Mianyang Government funded the building's fit out and Allens Arthur Robinson provided pro bono legal advice.

ANZ also announced today it would donate a further RMB 80,000 (A\$15,000) for new furniture for the ANZ Building and provide 340 backpacks containing stationery and dictionaries for students.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, ANZ Chief Executive Officer Mr Mike Smith said: "ANZ has a long term commitment to China and this project gave us an opportunity to make a lasting difference to this community which has suffered a terrible ordeal."

BlueScope Steel's Mr Tim Lefebvre said: "We are not only helping local children advance their education, but by using high quality light steel construction, we have also helped train local construction workers so they have the knowledge and skills to continue building high quality buildings."

Vice Mayor of Mianyang City Mr Huang Zhengliang said: "The project has given the community back one of its important focal points. We are forever grateful for the generosity of these Australian companies which have helped us to rebuild this local school. Our schools are an essential foundation for our community now and into the future."

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