Pingyao Ancient City
Fanjia Jie Historic District

Funding Prospectus

Conservation and Heritage Revitalization in Partnership with the Local Community

Shanxi, China

December 2011
Pingyao Ancient City – Fanjia Jie Historic District

GHF China Heritage
Conservation and Heritage Revitalization
Fanjia Jie Historic District

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Executive Summary
Global Heritage Fund (GHF) is seeking to secure funding of $500,000 in 2012-13 for the first two years of the Fanjia Jie Historic Street Ward Revitalization Project, which will secure in-country co-funding of over $1.5 million from the Shanxi Provincial Government Ministry of Construction. This is a unique opportunity to lead completion of the first authentic preservation and rehabilitation of a Pingyao Ancient City historic street ward, which will serve as a conservation and development model for historic courtyard residences in China’s last walled ancient city, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

In Pingyao, traditional courtyard residences are an integral component of the World Heritage Site, and these courtyards embody many of the traditions of Chinese Han people in central China yet retain distinctive regional characteristics. However, Pingyao Ancient City has about 35,000 residents, and poverty is widespread. There are currently no official statistics available on the per capita income for the ancient city; but a field survey in Fanjia Jie conducted by Shanghai Tongji University in 2010 revealed that the median per capita income for the residents living there is about $3 a day, and there is a large disparity between high- and low income households. Most of these historic courtyards do not have sewage removal service or piped heating, so the lack of basic infrastructure and inability to maintain the deteriorating historical structures lead to difficult living conditions and blighted buildings.

GHF completed the conservation and public opening of the first model Historic Courtyard in Pingyao’s history through a public-private partnership. Lauded by the community and municipality, GHF has been invited to lead the conservation and community development of an entire historic streetscape using the same methods and preservation standards for authenticity, integrity, community involvement and heritage management.

GHF believes that the preservation of Fanjia Jie Historic District will provide a model which will be adopted not only across the entire ancient city of Pingyao but across Shanxi Province and China where historic district protection and development is a prevailing challenge.

Founded in 2002, GHF’s mission is to protect, preserve and sustain the most significant and endangered cultural heritage sites in the developing world. Over the past eight years, GHF has completed six projects and has 12 in process.

Using its proven four-step Preservation by Design® methodology, GHF integrates conservation and development to create a living framework that combines long-range planning, community engagement, site monitoring and evaluation. Led by a Senior Advisory Board and supported by its Global Heritage Network (GHN) of experts and GHF Project Directors, Preservation by Design incorporates the latest methods and technologies, combined with a partner-driven conservation strategy to increase the prospects for long-term successful and sustainable preservation efforts.

GHF’s timely investments, global network of experts and integrated methodology work in tandem to create a cycle of sustainable preservation and community development. We save threatened sites by providing matching funding, expert guidance in the early stages of cultural asset development, and addressing many of the coordinating and funding challenges.
Above: Map showing the location of Pingyao Ancient City.
The Opportunity

GHF - A Catalyst for Major Change in China Heritage Preservation

While China is fast becoming one of the world’s super economic powers, though its explosive growth has come at a price as the economic gains have not been shared equally. Millions have become richer, but hundreds of millions have not. More than 60 per cent of the population still toils in agriculture, and the country's "economic miracle" has yet to make an appearance in much of the country. Corruption also remains well entrenched. The skewed emphasis on economic development is causing even greater stress on critically significant global heritage sites in China as they face massive threats from unsustainable tourism, poor conservation standards, a lack of community involvement and unplanned development and encroachment.

As one of the world’s oldest continuous civilizations, China is facing tremendous challenges in conserving its most important cultural heritage sites. Hundreds of ancient sites, historic cities and cultural landscapes are at risk of destruction by unchecked urban sprawl, encroachment and pollution connected to China’s rapid development. Protecting China’s remaining ancient treasures without impeding development is a delicate balance.

Many of China’s most spectacular and vulnerable heritage sites are located in some of the poorest provinces in the country’s interior where financial, technical and human resources are seriously lacking. Well planned, responsible cultural tourism presents one of the best opportunities for economic betterment of local communities living close to world-class heritage sites and treasures.

The emergence of a newly rich middle class and the ease of transportation have created a swell in domestic Chinese tourism. China’s National Tourist Office recorded more than 1 billion domestic travelers in 2006. Furthermore, the UN World Tourism Organization ranked China as the fourth visited country in 2006, attracting 49.6 million international tourist arrivals, and predicts it will become the number one international tourist destination by 2020.

GHF is working to build a sustainable, nationwide program to save China’s last remaining world-class heritage sites from destruction by the onslaught of mass tourism and unplanned development. GHF’s current projects in China are tulou preservation in Fujian and Pingyao Ancient City in Shanxi Province. GHF completed a project at Foguang Temple in Shanxi Province and another in Lijiang Ancient Town, Yunnan Province, where it was requested by UNESCO Asia Pacific to undertake a systematic process of planning and model conservation aimed at maintaining the historical integrity of this ancient Naxi tribe town.

GHF’s goal is to work as a convening NGO making strategic early planning and design investments to secure in-country funding to save 10 endangered world heritage and national treasure sites in China’s least developed provinces over the next 10 years. Without private philanthropy, intervention of appropriate governing, improved planning, zoning and scientific conservation, many of China’s glorious heritage sites will be lost forever.
GHF Priority Conservation Area

Above: Map based on high resolution aerial photograph showing protected areas of Pingyao and the location of areas of GHF intervention. Fanjia Jie is the blue section in the lower left of the walled city.
## Conservation and Heritage Revitalization
### Fanjia Jie Historic District

### Major Goals and Budget Summary 2012-13

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Above: Pingyao Historic Courtyard (an abandoned school) prior to GHF conservation.

Above: The same courtyard after conservation by GHF in partnership with the local community.
Pingyao Ancient City – Fanjia Jie Historic District

Above: A section of the largely intact perimeter wall around Pingyao Ancient City.

Pingyao Ancient City – the First Banking Capital of China

Pingyao Ancient City in central Shanxi province is considered to be the first banking capital of China. At its zenith in the late Qing Dynasty, there were as many as 22 draft banks in the city, with more than 400 branches country-wide and spread as far as countries including Russia, Mongolia and Japan. The city has been continuously occupied in its current locations since the Northern Wei Dynasty (AD 424), and its long and rich history is witnessed by five National-, two Provincial-, two City- and 16 County-level protected sites within its 2.25km² enclosure wall. Located 90 km from Taiyuan, the provincial capital of Shanxi, Pingyao is only a one-hour flight from Beijing.

One of only two Chinese ancient cities with UNESCO World Heritage status, Pingyao Ancient City received the honor in 1997 for its exceptional preservation of an intact, classic Han Chinese city from the Ming and Qing dynasties (1368-1911). Today, in addition to its famous intact Ming Dynasty city wall, there are close to 4,000 Ming- and Qing-era courtyard residences, many of which were built by some of the wealthiest Shanxi merchants, and numerous historic temples, as well as commercial and civic structures such as China’s first draft bank, Rishengchang and the ancient seat of the municipality (magistrate’s office).

Its urban fabric shows the evolution of architectural styles and town planning in Imperial China over five centuries. In retaining its features, the city provides a remarkably complete picture of cultural, social, economic and religious development during one of the most seminal periods of Chinese history.

The ancient city is surrounded by a massive rammed earth and masonry wall that measures more than 12 meters high, 3.5 meters wide and with a total perimeter of 6.4 kilometers. The maintenance of the wall, the heavy demand of safeguarding the numerous protected sites within it, and limitations in the existing governing structure leave few resources and little expertise to manage Pingyao’s unprecedented nexus of pressures from:

1) the high density 35,000 low-income residents living within its ancient walls (for a historic city built for 15,000) and their wishes to access modern living needs,
2) deterioration of its 3,000+ historic courtyard residences, many of which are in private ownership and are low-income housing, and
3) the onslaught of mass tourism and economic development.
Pingyao Ancient City – Fanjia Jie Historic District

Major Threats to Pingyao Ancient City

Pingyao Ancient City is plagued by extreme blight and poverty, occupied by a largely low-income, high-density population. The decline of the historic buildings is aggravated by the lack of sufficient preservation investment, regulation and enforcement. During the Cultural Revolution, the large courtyard compounds occupied by individual wealthy families were confiscated and redistributed to multiple families, leading to extensive modifications.

Above: Typical blighted conditions for most of Pingyao’s 30,000 residents.

Today the problem has yet to be resolved due to complicated multiple ownerships and occupancy. Due to the poverty of the region and within the ancient city, and burdened with problems caused by historical and political blunders, Pingyao is facing a critical shortage of preservation and maintenance funds for its rich historical treasures that are threatened by irreversible destruction due to decades of neglect and unplanned modern developments.
Pingyao Ancient City – Fanjia Jie Historic District

Above: Historical structures in Pingyao suffering from neglect.
Pingyao Ancient City – Fanjia Jie Historic District

Priority Conservation Area: The Fanjia Jie Historical District

Located in the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Pingyao Ancient City in Shanxi, China, Fanjia Jie (Fan Family Street) is home to 31 courtyards from the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) Dynasties. Pingyao Ancient City has the distinction of an exceptionally well preserved wall, being home to approximately 4,000 historic courtyard residences and China’s earliest banks.

GHF’s goals in Pingyao are to preserve its vernacular architecture, revitalize its intangible heritage and stimulate sustainable heritage development. As an urban, living ancient city, Pingyao faces a host of challenges in the sustainable preservation of its tangible and intangible heritage as well as in its responsible development to improve living standards in historic courtyard houses, generate jobs for its residents and create informed and involved stewards of this irreplaceable heritage site.

The Fanjia Jie Historic Street Ward Conservation and Development Model Project aims to faithfully preserve its architecturally significant courtyards, revitalize the rich intangible arts and crafts traditions, create much-needed green spaces, develop economic opportunities for local residents, and engage and train the local community to become informed stewards of this unique cultural heritage site.

The Fanjia Jie project was co-conceived by Shanxi Province Ministry of Construction, Pingyao Urban and Rural Planning Bureau, Shanghai Tongji University Urban Planning Institute and Global Heritage Fund (GHF), led by GHF China Manager Kuanghan Li.
Pingyao Ancient City – Fanjia Jie Historic District

Originally, GHF proposed a project plan wherein selected significant historic courtyards located in different parts of the ancient city would be chosen for restoration to form a tourist route. However, after consultation with Pingyao Urban and Rural Planning Bureau, Shanxi Province Ministry of Construction, and Shanghai Tongji University Urban Planning Institute, it became clear that a “best-of-the-best courtyard” approach would not address the deeper issues relating to urban poverty, poor living conditions in the historic structures, lack of basic community services and complicated property ownership. Therefore, it was decided that the conservation of an entire traditional street ward with a complete cross sample of all the issues found in the ancient city would have a greater impact for the local community. The Fanjia Jie program is a product of this common vision and input from all parties.

A multi-disciplinary team was put together by the Pingyao Planning Bureau and GHF with participation by Shanxi Province Planning Institute and Pingyao Cultural Heritage Bureau in July 2008. The team conducted a survey of Fanjia Jie and collected basic information on the architecture, building condition, social condition, culture and history of the Fanjia Jie street quarter. In August 2009, under the guidance of Professor Nancy Shao and GHF China Program Manager Kuanghan Li, graduate students from Shanghai Tongji University School of Planning carried out further investigation and analysis of the architectural and social conditions of the street quarter. Following a presentation by Professor Shao to the Pingyao County Government in September 2009, the county government officially committed to the street quarter conservation and development program. Through continued collaboration and efforts from GHF, the project was also presented to the Shanxi Province Ministry of Construction, which has approved and awarded a 10 million RMB grant.
This extensive GHF-funded survey has shown that habitation in these magnificent historic structures does not provide much comfort to the local inhabitants. The lack of a drainage system, flush toilets, piped heating and overcrowding are some of the major problems that are predominant in the ancient city. Inevitably, many of these historic buildings have become low-income rental units, where many of the inhabitants do not have the means nor feel the need to maintain the architecture. Through the findings of the survey, it became evident that in order to preserve the historic buildings in the long run, it is essential to have the support and involvement of the residents; improvement of living conditions is invaluable to the conservation of the built heritage.

The design of the Fanjia Jie development plan is a direct result of the survey and study of the community. The actual needs and current issues facing the residents, such as the lack of basic services and modern living conveniences, are being addressed in the project. Throughout the research and design process, planners visited each household multiple times to explain what the project will entail and how it will impact their lives. Both GHF and Shanghai Tongji University have recommended strongly that the government hold a public forum to present the final plan and invite feedback from the residents.

Above: The survey team interviewing residents of Pingyao Ancient Town.
Developing High-Value Cultural Tourism

Increasing the appeal of the street ward through cultural tourism planning is critical to achieving long-term economical support. Preliminary suggestions include the establishment of arts and crafts studios, a community center and a heritage park along with the promotion of festivals and special events.

The proposed plan by Shanghai Tongji University includes a heritage park and handicrafts workshop which will demonstrate the history and traditions of Pingyao, focusing on the vernacular architecture and traditional lifestyle. Residents will continue to occupy most of the courtyards and will have the option of opening their homes to tourists for visitation. The heritage park – or “special protected street ward” – will be part of the Pingyao tourist map.

The social survey indicated that residents are interested in interactions with tourists but would like to ensure their street first and foremost serves residential needs and interests. Almost 60% of households expressed their willingness to do so, and only 3% of the households indicated their unwillingness – mostly because of concerns about disruption of their daily lives and a possible increase in traffic and noise pollution. A great disparity in development currently exists between the main tourist streets in the core of the ancient city and those outside the core, so that many of the latter are unable to enjoy the growing economic opportunities from increasing tourism.

Many tourists only buy a ticket to enter the core area, visit a few sites, eat lunch, buy a few trinkets and then leave after a few hours. GHF is working with Pingyao County to reverse this trend to extend the duration of visitation and quality of experience and attract visitors with deeper interest in arts and culture in order to increase the level of revenue capture by a broader base of local residents.
Above: Design of the Fanjia Jie Street Ward showcasing the Heritage Park by Shanghai Tongji University; plan and 3D rendering.
Preservation with Development

GHF and Pingyao County supported a Master Conservation Plan in 2005 as a first step toward comprehensively and systematically preserving the ancient city and supporting its thoughtfully planned development. GHF engaged a team of experts at the U.S. National Parks Service to provide guidance in site interpretation, visitor services, historic preservation and park management for Pingyao, and in 2006 and 2008 GHF sponsored a study trip for the Chinese team to visit and learn from conservation and museum leaders at Colonial Williamsburg, the Smithsonian, Quebec City, Yosemite National Park and Golden Gate National Park.

Under the direction of Professor Nancy Shao Yong from the prestigious Shanghai Tongji University’s Urban Planning School, the master conservation plan addresses the most pressing development issues of the ancient city; measurement, mapping, documentation, population survey and threat assessment of the city have now been completed.

The final plan includes a comprehensive site conservation plan, budget and milestones for the protection and restoration of Pingyao Ancient City, and a management plan. New legal and regulatory protection as well as innovative private-public conservation and development are imperative outcomes of the plan. In addition, GHF is co-funding the authentic restoration and rehabilitation of selected Qing Dynasty courtyard buildings.

Although it was once the banking capital of China, Pingyao’s current largest economy is the coke (processed coal) industry. However, due to tightening environmental regulations, the municipality has been forced to close down some of the coke processing plants and is actively seeking to develop the tourism and service industry to replace the lost revenue. Since Pingyao obtained its World Heritage Site status in 1997, GDP generated by the service industry has increased from 5.6% to 46.2% in 12 years; 12% of the total GDP in 2009 comes from ticketing sales. Responsible tourism development provides compelling opportunities for the city’s residents to work and live in Pingyao while preserving its heritage and maintaining the city’s social and family structures.
The Fanjia Jie Historic Street Ward Conservation and Development Model Project is an exemplary project that aims to resolve the unique set of issues faced at a World Heritage Site, especially that of a “living city,” taking into consideration the singular value of the WHS and realistic cultural, social, economical and environmental impacts. The project will be implemented through application of appropriate conservation techniques, policies and management strategies under the guidance of and training in both national and international conservation principles.

Above: Extensive training by international and Chinese experts in the provincial areas of China is critical to building local capacity for heritage conservation. Here, GHF Director of International Conservation John Hurd leads a workshop training session in the streets of Pingyao.
Guiding Principles

Comprehensive approach to conservation: Balancing conservation and development in multi-faceted (cultural, social, economic) aspects;

Community interests: Well being of the local residents will be the core guiding principle in drafting the project strategy and policies;

Environmental consciousness: Application of new technology to historic building repair so that the structures can be more energy efficient, reduce pollution and resultant carbon release, and ultimately, improve the current living conditions;

Promote cultural tourism: Through in-depth study and interpretation of the historical and cultural elements of Fanjia Jie, the tangible and intangible environments will be integrated, and authentic courtyard lifestyle can be presented to visitors without distortion as an authentic “living ancient city.”

The traditional layout and courtyard architectonics have been destroyed by addition and erection of inappropriate structures to meet the needs of residents; therefore, in order to preserve the tangible heritage, the first task is to understand and carry out sensible planning of the traditional courtyard spaces. A detailed plan needs to be drafted based on restoration of the traditional courtyard spaces and future reuse consideration. The plan should list the historic buildings in need of protection and repair; new architecture that will be demolished, rehabilitated or added; and finalize the design of an overall site plan. After finalization of the plan, historic building conservation plans, rehabilitation and new construction design will be performed according to the building conservation, rehabilitation and construction approaches outlined in the overall plan.
Above: No.11 Fanjia Jie, before demolition of added structures.

Above: No.11 Fanjia Jie, after demolition of added structures.
Pingyao Ancient City – Fanjia Jie Historic District

Above: The entrance to a historical courtyard home in the Fanjia Jie district.
Pingyao Cultural Heritage Development Program

The Pingyao Cultural Heritage Development Program is part of Global Heritage Fund’s broader China Heritage Program, established in 2005 to help save some of China’s most important historic heritage sites from destruction.

The Pingyao Cultural Heritage Development Program aims to preserve the vernacular architecture, revitalize and stimulate the traditional arts and establish special historical areas. The program will restore Ming- and Qing Dynasty courtyards for adaptive reuse, conduct classes in traditional crafts and building methods, and provide training for the management of cultural resources in Pingyao Ancient City.

Above: A completed GHF courtyard, a model for Pingyao and China.

A representative historic area, Fanjia Jie, has been selected and will be the first cluster of historical residences to be restored for both public and private uses as a model. This is an area with an intact traditional streetscape and an ensemble of courtyard residences from the late Qing Dynasty to the Early Republic period. This historical area, with its outstanding courtyards, will form a vibrant inner circle of arts and cultural offerings within the walls of the ancient city and be a model to other neighborhoods for preservation and adaptive reuse.

Working with the Pingyao County Government as well as academic and research institutions, GHF is supporting a comprehensive survey of the tangible and intangible cultural resources. This thorough survey will inform and enrich the Heritage Development Program and identify appropriate adaptive reuse of the historic buildings. Information collected will contribute to the development of a comprehensive interpretation plan.
Improvement in Living Conditions

Currently, the majority of residents within the ancient city are living in poor conditions with no flush toilets, piped heating or drainage. Improvement of living conditions in historical buildings is an important aspect as the residents will become engaged and informed stewards of their historical environment only if they are content with their life in the historic courtyards. In the statistical sampling, nearly 75% of the residents were in favor of moving to a district with better living conditions, while less than 20% were opposed to relocation, an issue already in negotiation between the residents and the local government. Guided by the results of the survey, GHF understands the critical importance of improving living conditions in retaining residents who will be motivated stakeholders in the sustainable conservation and development of Fanjia Jie.

Active involvement of the local community is vital to ensuring long-term sustainability and preservation of these courtyards houses. The traditional courtyards need to be improved to satisfy modern needs, and the street ward has to resolve the issues of energy supply and waste management.
Preserving Historic Courtyards and the Living Arts

Based on Shanghai Tongji’s Master Conservation Plan, the benefits of the Heritage Development Program would be three-fold. The Master Conservation Plan has identified, surveyed and prioritized the most significant and important architectural heritage structures. Investment in these courtyards will be based on GHF’s UNESCO-award-winning public-private partnership program in Lijiang, Yunnan, and courtyard owners will play a central role in the development of their businesses.

The courtyards in the Pingyao Cultural Heritage Development Program will be authentically restored and adapted for public and private uses. Private homes can serve as model residences to inspire other owners to faithfully restore and maintain their courtyard homes.

Public uses can include:

- Living heritage workshop
- Community center
- Gallery and lecture spaces
- House museum
- Training school offering courses in foreign languages and heritage interpretation
- Arts and Crafts studios devoted to traditional techniques such as stone, wood and brick carving

Above: Local craftspeople display their productions and demonstrate techniques for the public.
Pingyao Ancient City – Fanjia Jie Historic District

Of particular focus is the creation of living heritage workshops where visitors can participate in and observe the creation of traditional crafts and specialty products such as lacquerware, artisanal foods, papercutting, cotton shoemaking, calligraphy and fine arts. In some of the larger historic courtyards, visitors can take beginner workshops or master classes to immerse themselves in the arts and culture of Pingyao.

The Heritage Development Program will support training – led by the remaining skilled craftspeople and artisans – in order to pass on and preserve Pingyao’s unique living heritage of arts, crafts, cuisines and performing arts to the next generation. This integrated, sustainable program addresses the economic imbalance of the current tourism landscape and preserves the last remaining endangered historic courtyards and living arts and cultural heritage, thereby realizing the authenticity and character of Pingyao Ancient City.

Above: GHF cultural revitalization programs in Pingyao have involved hundreds of children and adults.
GHF Partners in Conservation

GHF is working with a number of partners to realize the long-term preservation and sustainability of Pingyao’s significant cultural heritage and living communities, including:

Ardent Foundation
Bei Shan Tang Foundation
Curtis L. Carlson Family Foundation
The Daniel K. Thorne Foundation, Inc.
Lee Foundation
The Caterpillar Foundation
The Tiffany & Co. Foundation
Pingyao County People’s Government
Shanxi Provincial Government Department of Construction
Shanxi Urban Planning Society
Shanghai TongJi University Urban Planning & Design Institute
Shanghai TongJi University Architectural Design & Research Institute
UNESCO Beijing Office

Above: A young local resident cycles past the entrance to a courtyard home in the Fanjia Jie district.
Pingyao Ancient City – Fanjia Jie Historic District

GHF Leader in Conservation: Kuanghan Li, China Heritage Program Manager

Above: Kuanghan Li (front, center) with participants in a conservation workshop conducted in 2008.

Kuanghan Li joined Global Heritage Fund in 2008 as Manager of GHF’s China Heritage Program. Han manages GHF’s Pingyao Ancient City and Fujian Tulou projects in China, including overseeing GHF’s planning, restoration, and interpretation efforts. Han is also responsible for new China Heritage project investigations.

Han has worked as a consultant to the Getty Conservation Institute’s collaborative project with the Chinese State Administration for Cultural Heritage in Hebei, China and also Kham Aid Foundation’s historic assessment and conservation efforts in Sichuan, China. Han has also worked for a number of other organizations involved with architectural design and historic preservation including, Unicorn Foundation (Sichuan, China), Namgyal Institute of Research in Ladakhi Art and Culture (Ladakh, India), India National Trust of Art and Cultural Heritage (Zanskar, India), Kilo Architectures (Paris, France) and Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates (New York, USA).

Han has a BA in Architectural Studies from the National University of Singapore and an MSc in Historic Preservation and an Advanced Certificate in Architectural Conservation and Site Management from the University of Pennsylvania. She is fluent in Mandarin and French.
Contact Information

For more information on GHF’s conservation work to save the most significant and endangered cultural heritage sites in developing countries, see GHF Projects under What We Do at:

www.globalheritagefund.org

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About Global Heritage Fund
Global Heritage Fund (GHF) is an international heritage conservancy established to protect, preserve and sustain the most significant and endangered cultural heritage sites in the developing world.

GHF works together with local communities and in-country partners to save their cultural heritage treasures and multiply their economic, educational and environmental benefits for future generations.

GHF’s multiplier effect is made possible by working closely with local communities and a global network of experts to provide catalytic funding using our 360-degree Preservation by Design® methodology – planning, science, community and partnerships to protect and preserve endangered heritage sites and maximize income, employment and investment in communities and regions around GHF Projects.

Since 2002, GHF has six completed and 12 in-progress projects at global heritage sites which have generated over $100 million in new economic investment and income in developing regions to alleviate poverty.