

RURAL **DEVELOPMENT**



RURAL DEVELOPMENT



INTRODUCTION

Rural development is a major part of Oxfam Hong Kong's (OHK) work in mainland China. OHK began implementing its rural development programmes in Southwest China in 1991 and later extended its work to the northwest region. The programme's geographic focus now includes Yunnan. Sichuan. Guizhou, Guangxi, Shaanxi, Gansu and Qinghai provinces.

The programme has several aims. It aims to improve the livelihoods of poor and disaster-prone communities in Western China, and enhance their capacity for disaster prevention and risk reduction, climate change adaptation. It also aims to empower the communities and enhance their organising skills. OHK strives to influence government departments to improve and implement related policies, and reinvent the participatory management mechanism for the poverty alleviation system to promote sustainable community development.

1. RURAL POVERTY AT A GLANCE

RURAL POPULATION AND INCOME Rural population

helow poverty Line1 55.75 million

The annual per capita disposable income of urban households

> The annual per capita disposable income of farmers2

US\$1,660

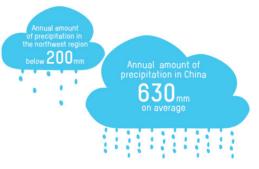
36.6% of that of their urban counterparts

2015

DEVELOPMENT RESTRAINED BY ECOLOGICAL FRAGILITY AND POVERTY CAUSED BY **CLIMATE CHANGE**



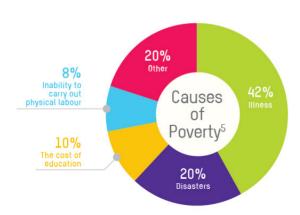




- The poor natural conditions, serious droughts, steep slopes, soil erosion and frequent disasters in the northwest region make agricultural production and animal husbandry difficult, which threaten rural livelihoods.
- · Because of soil denudation, some land areas of the southwest region are prone to droughts or floods, causing casualties and economic loss.
- · Climate change has caused various natural disasters and changes in the patterns of temperature and precipitation. which has led to the reduction in food production. Moreover. the lack of a climate change adaptation perspective in poverty alleviation plans in some regions and farmers' low adaptive capacity have trapped vulnerable communities in poverty as they face recurring disasters.
- 1 China's national rural poverty line is an annual income per capita of RMB2,300 (USD 333) at constant 2010 prices.
- 2 The annual disposable income per capita refers to the total sum of income which can be used for consumption and savings, i.e. the income which a resident can use to purchase whatever he/she pleases.
- 3 Source: National Climate Change Adaptation Plan, 2013
- Source: National Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2013; China's National Assessment Report on Risk Management and Adaptation of Climate Extremes and Disasters, March, 2015

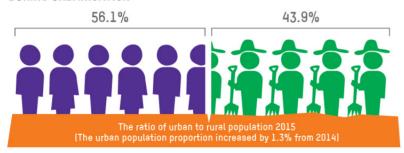
Rural Development | 1 2 | Rural Development

INADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC SERVICES, ILLNESS, DISASTERS AND THE COST OF EDUCATION TRAP PEOPLE IN POVERTY

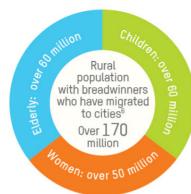


In the remote mountainous areas of the western region, transport, communications and information services have continued to lag behind. Furthermore, the facilities for medical care, hygiene and basic education are inadequate and also of poor quality. Thus, poor farmers and herders have to pay a high price both financially and in terms of time it takes for them to travel to areas where they can use public services.

CHILDREN, WOMEN AND THE ELDERLY STAY BEHIND IN VILLAGES DURING URBANISATION



 Rapid urbanisation has led to the outflow of talent and financial capital from villages to cities. The problems and pressures children, women and the elderly who stay behind face are prominent and numerous. For instance, children face development and educational problems, women experience heavy financial burdens and the pressure of caring for their families, and the elderly deal with challenges to their livelihoods and some even commit suicide. Without a significant amount of villagers with a variety of capacities, community organising is difficult. Participation in public affairs and community governance of stay behind villagers is usually limited.



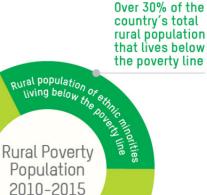
- ⁵ Source: National Poverty Alleviation Office
- 6 With rapid industrialisation and urbanisation in place, more and more rural labour force (mainly males) has been driven towards towns and cities, leaving behind a large group of people, mostly the elderly, women and children, in the villages,

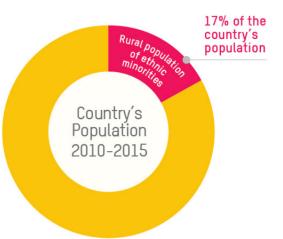
SMALLHOLDER FARMERS MARGINALISED BY THE MARKET

It is difficult for small-scale farming economy to resist market risks. As
individual rural households operate on small-sized and scattered lands,
farmers are too weak to respond to market risks. Moreover, increased
production may not translate into increased income; even result in less
income due to market uncertainties and the lack of market information.

MARGINALISED GROUPS

- Due to historical and geographical factors, the social and economic development in ethnic minority regions lags behind other regions. The pace of poverty alleviation in the eight provinces7 where ethnic minorities predominantly reside has also lagged behind that of the country over the past two vears This further demonstrates the growing difficulties in poverty alleviation in ethnic minority regions.
- As of 2015, rural population of ethnic minorities living below the poverty line: 18.13 million, 32.5% of the country's total rural population that lives below the poverty line.
- As of 2015, there are 421 ethnic autonomous counties with per capita income levels below the poverty line, 51% of all poverty-stricken areas across the country.





Source: The PRC's National Bureau of Statistics, State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development, Ministry of Civil Affairs, Ministry of Land and Resources, State Ethnic Affairs Commission, National Health and Family Planning Commission, All-China Women's Federation, China Meteorological Administration and The World Bank.

Rural Development | 3

Namely, these are the five autonomous regions: Inner Mongolia, Guangxi, Tibet, Ningxia and Xinjiang, and three provinces: Guizhou, Yunnan and Qinghai.

2. THEORY OF CHANGE [APRIL 2014 - MARCH 2019]

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC GOALS

Livelihoods of poor communities plaqued by disasters in western region improved; their capacity for disaster prevention and risk reduction, climate change adaptation and community organising strengthened.

Policies and measures to raise communities' capacity for climate change adaptation improved, and well implemented by related government departments.

Government further integrated participatory approach in its poverty alleviation programmes.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- * Livelihoods of poor communities improved.
- * Awareness and commnities' capacity for disaster prevention and risk reduction and climate change adaptation enhanced: systematic mechanism for disasters prevention and risk reduction established.
- * Community-led strengthened with provision of public
- * Rural communities' market coping capacity
- * Climate change into government's poverty alleviation
- * Participatory concepts and approaches adopted and promoted in the system by poverty alleviation officials.

STRATEGIES

Community-driven development::

Set up community cooperative organisations. initiate community-driven development, learn about traditional culture and community values, and nurture community's ability to mobilise external resources.

Integrated rural development:

Diversify livelihoods, sustainably manage environmental resources, provide skills training, offer access to community funds, ensure women's health and offer access to small-scale infrastructure and facilities (e.g. toilets)

Urban-rural connection:

Set up cooperatives, enhance rural communities' ability to cope with market demands, and provide support to rural-urban migrant workers and returnees from cities.

Climate change mitigation and adaptation:

Promote circular agriculture, waste management, clean energy, green agricultural technology and facilities that save energy and reduce emissions.

Collect and study provincial-level policies regarding poverty alleviation and climate change adaptation.

Monitor poverty alleviation policy changes, implement pilot projects, and carry out ongoing action research.

Establish partnership with experts to support policy and theoretical research, and advocacy.

Empower partners:

- * Capacity building for partners: Build awareness about concepts (e.g. participation, aender. vulnerability, etc.), provide training on rural issues. project and financial management, policy analysis, etc.
- * Support partners to put concepts into practice.
- * Build regional networks and platforms for rural development learning.

3. MILESTONES OF OHK'S RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

生的 縣出中國扶貧縣

Set up office in Kunming to support projects in southwest China; founded the Oxfam China Development Fund Published the book: 'Trailblazing a Path for Poverty Alleviation in China', an account of OHK's work on poverty alleviation and development

Signed a
collaboration
agreement with
the Guangxi
Office of Poverty
Alleviation and
Development



Launched a
disaster relief and
rehabilitation
programme in
response to the
Wenchuan 5.12
earthquake, and set
up the Chengdu
office



Launched an
emergency relief
and rehabilitation
programme in
response to
the Yushu
earthquake

Completed
rehabilitation work for
Wenchuan earthquake.
OHK supported 228 emergency
relief and rehabilitation
projects, and benefited over
850,000 villagers
(gross count); the Chengdu
office closed after it had
completed five years of
rehabilitation
work

Launched
a disaster relief
and rehabilitation
programme in
response to the
Yaan earthquake
in Sichuan
Province



1992

1994 1995 1997 1998

1999

2002

ě

2006

2007

2008

2009

2010

2011

2012

2013

710



Launched rural development programmes in Yunnan and Guizhou provinces

1991

Extended work to the northwest region

Set up office in Guiyang Set up office in Lanzhou

2001

Signed a
collaboration
agreement with
the Yunnan Office
of Poverty
Alleviation and
Development

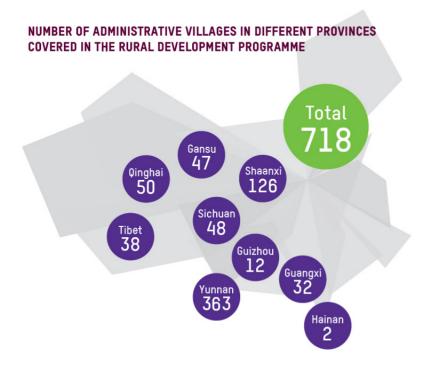
Being the first
among international
non-governmental
organisations (INGOs), OHK
signed a collaboration
agreement with the Centre of
Poverty Alleviation with Foreign
Funding of the State Council
Leading Group Office of Poverty
Alleviation and Development on
the Wenchuan earthquake
pilot rehabilitation
programme

Signed a
collaboration
framework
agreement with the
Centre for Disaster
Reduction in Yunnan
Province



Launched an
emergency relief
and rehabilitation
programme in
response to the
Ludian earthquake
in Yunnan
Province

4. MAJOR OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES (APRIL 2014 – MARCH 2016)

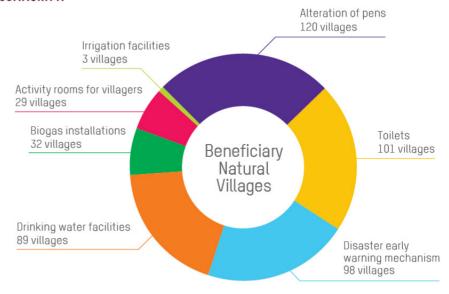


We implemented projects to build communities' capacity to improve their livelihoods, hygiene conditions, capacity to prevent and reduce the risk of disasters as well as adapt to climate change.

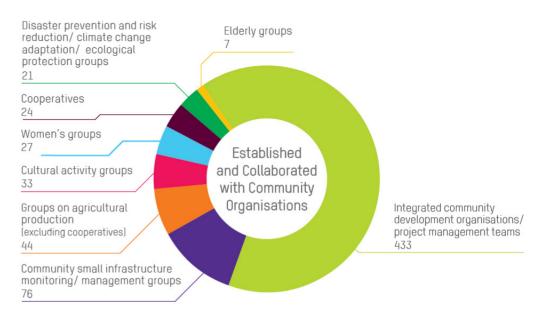
62,871 VILLAGERS (GROSS COUNT) BENEFITED FROM THE VARIOUS THEMATIC CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES (INCLUDING TRAININGS AND FIELD VISITS).

18,567	15,411	13,462	9,667	3,918	1,846
villagers	villagers	villagers	villagers	villagers	villagers
Production, income generation	Health	Allocation and management of poverty alleviation resources	Disaster prevention and risk reduction/ Climate change adaptation/ Ecological protection	Community organisations/ Cooperatives	

472 NATURAL VILLAGES BENEFITED FROM THE BUILDING OF SMALL-SCALE INFRASTRUCTURES AND IMPLEMENTATION OF MECHANISMS IN THE COMMUNITY.



OHK facilitated the establishment of and collaborated with 665 community organisations in order to strengthen communities' self-governance. It also did so to provide communities with sustainable services and enhance their capacity to cope with market demands.



Rural Development | 9

GOOD PRACTICES

Sustainable Ecological Village Development Model

In 2012, Liugou Village in Shaanxi Province was struck by serious flood. OHK partnered with a local grassroots organisation, the Shaanxi Mothers' Environmental Protection Association, to integrate climate change adaptation into the rehabilitation and ecological development of the village. This partnership helped the villagers develop green livelihoods through tea growing and cattle farming. Through the project, villagers also learnt to reduce the use of pesticides by combining physical and biological solutions for disease and pest control, carry out household waste classification and compost using organic waste.

Through setting up the Pollution-Free Tea Cooperative, farmers saw an increase yearly in income of more than US\$290 for every mu (approximately 667 square metres) of tea plantation. The cooperative helped organise bulk orders, provided technological support, and provided a green certification for products to enhance marketability.

In response to disasters triggered by climate change, OHK and the Association also



supported the village to improve its disaster early-warning system, set up evacuation sites, provide villagers with a venue for disaster training and drills. Later when disaster struck, the Village Disaster Prevention Leading Group and the other eight working groups successfully transferred the villagers to nine evacuation sites, and avoided casualties.

Post-disaster Sustainable Development: Nurturing Community Organisations

Shuiguanyin Village in Shaanxi Province was seriously affected in the Wenchuan 5.12 earthquake. Oxfam and its partner actively assisted in the reconstruction of the facilities. In addition, in view of the community's reduced capacity to develop their livelihoods and lack of public services, OHK partnered with local organisation the Gender Development Solution to set up a community development fund for micro loans in 2012. This was managed by a management team whose members were elected by the villagers. This helped meet the villagers' various needs in terms of production, and enhanced their awareness and ability to participate in public affairs.

Part of the interest earned from the community development fund was used to build up villagers' capacity and to organise various community organisations, such as the Farmers' Technical School, the Women's Health School, the Community Disaster Prevention and Environmental Protection Group and Cultural Activities Team. The groups and activities have enriched the life of the villagers, especially that of the women who stayed behind, and have promoted self-governance in the community.

Community Driven Development Makes Government's Innovative Participatory Poverty Alleviation Mechanism a Reality

In 2013, OHK partnered with various government departments in Yunnan Province to implement community-driven development pilot projects in 14 administrative villages. The projects emphasised the communities' power to formulate its own plan through the use of poverty alleviation resources and the disclosure of appraisal criteria and management rules. This was done so as to enhance the communities' organisational capacity and explore how to make the government's participatory poverty alleviation mechanism innovative. The projects have successfully facilitated change in the government's perception of poverty alleviation as well as its operations. This has led to

the formulation of a policy paper on participatory approaches, which was incorporated into the government's appraisal scheme.

The projects also mobilised resources from the government at multiple levels. The matching fund of US\$813,000 from the provincial budget has helped enhance the efficiency of the use of these funds.



The Development of Minority Culture Strengthens Community Cohesion

Before the implementation of the projects, Baixing in Guizhou Province was a community made up of Yao people which received little attention from the outside world, with an annual per capita income of only US\$102. There, most of the young people had left to work in the cities; only the elderly, women and children stayed behind. Furthermore, the community's economy relied heavily on small-scale farming. There was a lack of cohesion in the community and its traditional culture was gradually fading away.

The projects supported by Oxfam, however, integrated the development of the Yao culture into the enhancement of the people's livelihoods, enabling the villagers to realise the value of their own culture. They started to develop cultural and creative products and handicrafts (such as Baixing maple dyeing), to market them and to develop in-depth experiential eco-tourism. Such activities have helped the community develop its livelihoods through its

culture and have brought about significant change. Their annual per capita income has increased by over five times as much. The villagers are proud of being a member of the community. Many young people have come back to their hometown to start their businesses, and five cultural companies have already been set up. Some craftsmen have also begun to form a cooperative together.



12 | Rural Development | 11

5. ABOUT OHK'S PARTNERS (APRIL 2014- MARCH 2016)

Strategic Goals	Number of partners (including government departments, local NGOs, academic, training and research institutes, women's organisations, private sector) by provinces									
	Yunnan	Sichuan	Guangxi	Guizhou	Gansu	Shaanxi	Qinghai	Multi- provinces		
Livelihoods of poor communities plagued by disasters in western region improved; their capacity for disaster prevention and risk reduction, climate change adaptation and community organising strengthened	33	11		9	12	12	7			
Policies and measures to raise communities' capacity for climate change adaptation improved and well implemented by related government departments	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-		
Government further integrated community participatory approach in its poverty alleviation programmes.	13	-	2	-	-	-	-	-		

Total number of partners: 948

CONTACT US

HONG KONG HEADQUARTERS

17/F, China United Centre, 28 Marble Road, North Point, Hong Kong Tel: (852) 2520 2525 Fax: (852) 2527 6307 Email: info@oxfam.org.hk Website: www.oxfam.org.hk

MAINLAND CHINA

OXFAM HONG KONG YUNNAN OFFICE

Unit 4, Block 7, Xihua Xiaoqu (East), Kunming, Yunnan, China 650032 Tel: (86-871) 6415 2189 / 6414 2033 Fax: (86-871) 6415 0599 Email: swpo@oxfam.org.hk

OXFAM HONG KONG GANSU OFFICE

Room F, 26/F Huafu Swiss Palace, No 213 Jinchang South Road, Chengguan District, Lanzhou, Gansu Province, China 730030 Tel: [86-931] 886 8655

Fax: (86-931) 886 8257 Email: gso@oxfam.org.hk

OXFAM HONG KONG BEIJING OFFICE - RURAL AND EDUCATION TEAM

Room 1104, Unit 1, Block D, Yinxing Xiaoqu,

No. 104 Beijing Road, Yunyan District, Guiyang, Guizhou Province, China 550001

Tel: (86-851) 8583 2408 Fax: (86-851) 8583 2407 Email: gzo@oxfam.org.hk

⁸ Some partners are implementing more than one project; they thus contribute to different strategic goals. They are classified into different strategic goals in the table but counted only once in the total number of partners.