

Outcome Document of Urbanization Project  
The 7<sup>th</sup> Country Programme of Cooperation  
between Government of China and UNFPA

# Social Services Should Be Provided to Urban Residential Population

Report on Research and Piloting of Policies to Promote  
Healthy Urbanization in China through the Provision of Social Services  
(Abridged Edition)



Department of Social Development, National  
Development and Reform Commission (NDRC)

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## Social Services Should Be Provided to Urban Residential Population Report on Research and Piloting of Policies to Promote Healthy Urbanization in China through the Provision of Social Services (Abridged Edition)<sup>1</sup>

### I Project background: introducing the concept of healthy urbanization

Urbanization is a process where population move from rural to urban areas and where proportion of urban population, industrial structure, lifestyles of the people, living quality and rural development constantly change and progress. Urbanization of people is the core of urbanization.

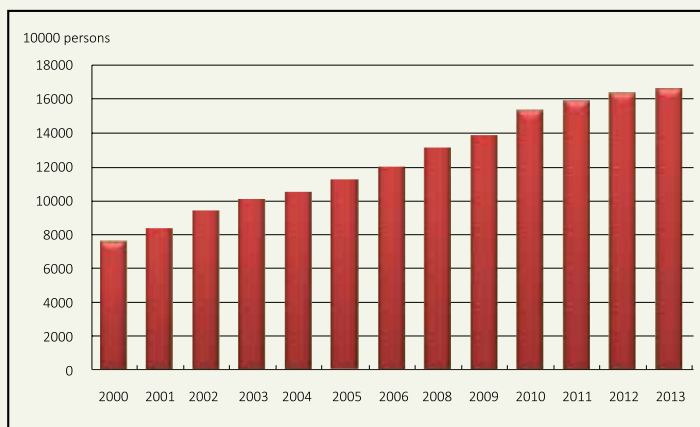
Healthy urbanization is a comprehensive development process that centers on urbanization of people to promote coordinated development of population urbanization, economy urbanization, land urbanization, society urbanization and urbanization of social services. Healthy urbanization requires that the process of urbanization fit the economic development level and coordinate with resources, environment, rural construction and provision of social services.

The urban-rural-segmented household registration system (known as *Hukou*) has been implemented in China for a long time, which restricted urban-rural migration and inter-region move of population. Featuring a typical under-urbanization, urbanization in China faces a series of challenges: firstly, urbanization in China has been falling behind industrialization for a long time. As a result, cities failed to give full play to their conglomeration effects and scale effects but gave rise to many problems such as localization of rural-based industry, sidelining of agriculture and semi-urban-semi-rural living of the rural population who were no longer engaged in agriculture. Secondly, the development process of urbanization in China obviously depends on policy arrangements. Since China has implemented a series of policy arrangements in favor of population mobility, farmers who emigrate for employment outside (known as rural migrant workers) have

been increasing (as shown in Fig. 1). In 2010, population migrating from rural to urban areas contributed 67.36% of urban population growth, making the major factor of urban population growth in China. Rural migrant workers as part of rural migrant population have been counted as urban population. As shown in Fig. 2, in 2013 urbanization rate of China reached 53.73% which is based on the statistics of urban residential population. This population included rural migrant workers and their families who had been living in urban areas for more than 6 months, and yet were not entitled to equal social services as those with urban *Hukou*. In fact, urban population with registered urban residence (non-agricultural population) only accounted for 35.7% of the total population in China. The gap between the urbanization rate and the rate of non-agricultural population has been in existence and widened gradually since the year 2000, which constitutes a major issue that must be addressed in the process of China's urbanization through policy arrangements. Thirdly, population urbanization lags behind land urbanization and as a result, a number of farmers have lost their lands. They are considered locally transferred agricultural population and sometimes are counted as urban population. These farmers will have to transform their production and life styles and will face uncertainties about their survival and development in future, which deserves attention during China's urbanization. Fourthly, urbanization is uneven in terms of regional distribution and therefore Government's policies to promote urbanization development should be based on overall planning while giving due considerations to conditions of localities. Fifthly, China is speeding up its urbanization and "urban problems" may become some of the most important ones that face Chinese city governments while urbanization transforms from a speed-oriented to a quality-oriented process.

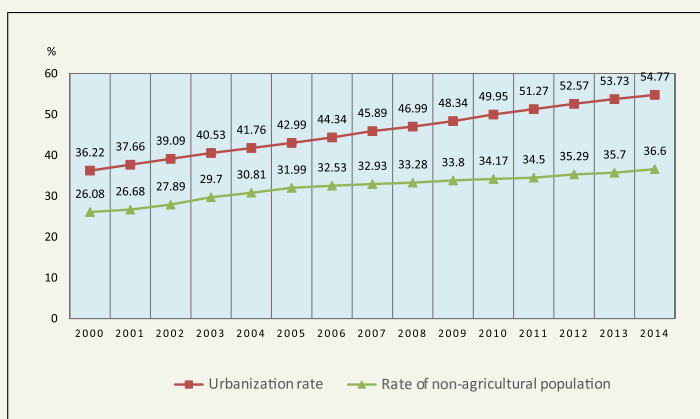
1. This report is an abridged edition of the outcome document of a collaboration project between Department of Social Development of the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), China Center for Urban Development (CCUD) and the United Nation Population Fund (UNFPA) China on "research and piloting of policies to promote healthy urbanization in China through the provision of social services". A complete report is available at: <http://www.unfpa.cn/sites/unfpa/files/publications/report-final.pdf>.

**Fig. 1: Number of Rural Migrant Workers in China from 2000 to 2013**



Source: Survey Report of the National Bureau of Statistics on Rural Migrant Workers and relevant data.

**Fig. 2: Urbanization Rate and Rate of Non-agriculture Population in China from 2000 to 2014**



Source: China Population and Employment Statistics Yearbooks over the years and relevant data

To address the above challenges, the Report upholds that China should walk a road of new-type urbanization and combine promoting people-centered urbanization with corrective measures to solve the problems generated in the past so as to promote a more fair, high-quality and high-efficiency urbanization where people could produce and live a better life and better satisfy their needs for an overall development. The top priorities are to solve the following issues in relation to urbanization of population: (1) promoting transformation of transferred agricultural population into regular

urban citizens; (2) building up a resource-conserving and environmental-friendly living environment; (3) forming a reasonable urban population layout; and (4) coordinating urban-rural population development.

Based on these understandings, the Department of Social Development of National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), the China Center for Urban Development (CCUD) and the United Nation Population Fund (UNFPA) China launched the project of "research and piloting of policies to promote

healthy urbanization in China through the provision of social services” in 2009. In its early stage, extensive literature studies and field visits were conducted, and on this basis, four cities (districts) were selected - Jinnan District of Tianjin Municipality, Zhengzhou City of Henan Province, Yanta District of Xi’an City and Changshu City of Jiangsu Province representing cities of variety development and urbanization levels, to pilot on various issues related to provisions of social services for residential urban population. This Report covers findings of both theoretical studies in the early stage and piloting in the later stage.

This study targets on transferred agricultural population in urban areas, both local and from other regions, as they are already considered as urban residential population. It is expected that the study will contribute to formulation and implementation of social service-related policies by the Government so that transferred agricultural population can be

gradually entitled to equal social services as those with urban *Hukou* and realize a real urbanization so as to promote a healthy urbanization in China.

## II Major Patterns of Urbanization in China and Status of Their Essential Social Services

This Report mainly studies six sectors of social services, namely, labor and employment, social assistance, social security, public education, public health and public housing. For the purpose of this report, social services are divided into essential social services and non-essential social services.

In terms of the relationship between urbanization and social services, this Report studies common experience and lessons of the United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, Brazil and Hungary in development of social services during urbanization. It is found out that social service policies were executed in



Table 1: Summary of Piloting Initiatives in Four Cities

Sector of Social Services	Housing	Education	Health	Social Security	Social Assistance	Household Registration System	Others	Innovative Initiatives
Jinnan District, Tianjin Municipality				√	√	√	Community development	To foster and develop community-level organizations (including social organizations) in rendering social services
Zhengzhou City		√				√	Development of migrant information management system	To link registration of migrants with access to social services
Yanta District, Xi'an City		√	√		√	√	Extending sanitation services to urban villages and cost analysis of piloted services by government	To lower the threshold for migrants to get local urban <i>Hukou</i> and extend social services to urban villages
Changshu City	√	√	√	√				To establish, through building public rental houses and regulating a housing rental market, a housing security system for families in hardship in both urban and rural areas and for rural migrant workers

Note: √ represents the piloting sectors chosen by the cities.

different sequences during urbanization of these countries. Interventions of social service policies by governments in different stages of urbanization process resulted in differences in speed and quality of urbanization. It can be inferred from the experience of these countries that governments must utilize social service policies as active and appropriate intervention during urbanization. It is also found through the study that urbanization interacts with social services: progress of urbanization promotes installation and evolution of social service system, and in turn, evolution of social service system pushes forward urbanization. Provision of various essential social services helps urbanization of transferred agricultural population by provid-

ing employment and development opportunities, maintaining physical and mental health and urban safety, mitigating various risks, building consensus and enabling them to better integrate into the urban society.

This Report studies the pattern of urbanization in five typical regions of China, namely, megalopolis in Eastern China, Pearl River Delta, Yangtze River Delta, large cities in Central China, and large cities in Western China, and the extent to which urbanization there is healthy. It also proposes the directions of urbanization development and corresponding major tasks of social services.

**Table 2: Directions of urbanization development and major tasks of social services in different regions of China**

Region	Urbanization Pattern	Status of Urbanization	Direction of Urbanization Development	Major Tasks of Social Services
Megalopolis in Eastern China	Suppressing secondary industry and promoting tertiary industry; urbanization of suburbs	Normal	Optimizing urban space structure and urban network to reduce the development pressure of downtown areas	Promoting development of satellite towns, and absorbing local farmers and migrant workers into various types of urban areas in their jurisdictions
Yangtze River Delta Region	Urbanization of local farmers	Under-urbanized	Increasing population in city proper and small towns and giving play to conglomeration	Encouraging migrants to gradually settle down and obtain <i>Hukou</i>
Pearl River Delta Region	Urbanization of migrants	Slightly over-urbanized and development unstable	Adjusting industrial structure	Promoting to grant non-native rural migrant workers with essential public services to retain labors and talented personnel
Large cities in Central China	Expansion of center cities	Co-existence of over-urbanized and under-urbanized.	Promoting construction of inhabitation areas for new urban population	Expanding coverage of social services to urban villages and promoting transformation of local farmers and migrating farmers into regular urban residents
Large cities in Western China	Expansion of center cities, coordinated urban-rural development, and development of rural areas driven by large cities	Co-existence of "basically normal", "over-urbanized" and "under-urbanized"	Promoting overall competitiveness of the secondary industry as well as service level of the tertiary industry	Expanding social service facilities to cities and towns of all levels, absorbing suburban population into urban areas, dealing with the issue of urban villages and granting equal citizenship to local farmers and migrants

Through analysis on characteristics of providing six essential social services in the above five regions and their effects on urbanization development, this Report proposes the following detailed measures to improve policies in relation to the provision of six essential social services in these five regions.

**Firstly, in terms of compulsory education,** in the megalopolis in Eastern China, 62% of children of migrant workers were admitted to public schools on average in Beijing and Shanghai, while 95% of these children in Tianjin were admitted to public schools. This report proposes to include children of migrant workers into the overall development planning of urban compulsory education by gradually increasing the number and proportion of children of migrant workers to be admitted to public schools and supporting development of private schools. It has proved to be an effective measure to establish high-quality schools at small towns, locations where district (county) government are located and new urban areas to encourage concentration of rural population in satellite towns and to relocate the population from downtown districts.

**In the Pearl River Delta region,** high threshold is imposed on children of migrant workers for admission to public schools. Private schools have become the major force of compulsory education for children of migrant workers. For example in Guangzhou, 64% of the children of migrant workers go to private schools. It is proposed that local governments make all efforts to expand the capac-

grant workers and as many as over 70% of them go to public schools. Meanwhile, local governments also try to solve the problem of education of children of migrant workers by standardizing and supporting non-government funded education. It is proposed that local governments in this region should vigorously improve the quality of education for children of migrant workers. First, local governments should establish high-quality schools at all levels in center towns, county seats and center cities of the region, to effectively promote conglomeration of rural population in urban areas. Second, local governments should include non-government funded education in the planning, management and service of urban education, and improve non-government funded education.

**In large cities in Central China,** on the main about 85% of the children of rural migrant workers go to public schools. Local governments fail to provide sufficient support for non-government funded education and the problem of scarce public education resources is prominent. Governments of some cities have, either actively or passively, made plans for school building which helps to mitigate resource shortage. It is proposed that local governments should strengthen building of middle and primary schools and reconstruction of weak schools in cities and build schools in expanded areas of cities. Local governments should also enlarge the development of non-government funded education. Superior governments should provide incentives to district and county governments to

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