



TRANSFORMATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATED PLANNING
PRACTICES OF GUANGZHOU IN VILLAGE PLANNING

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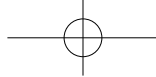
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PREFACE ONE

We are living in an age where the world's population has grown to 7 billion and where more than half of them now live in towns and cities. The significance of this demographic and geographic transformation is quite profound for the future of humanity and the configuration of urban and rural space of the world as a whole.

It is time to overcome the classical view of the relationship between urban and rural settlements that treats cities as service centres for rural areas, providing manufactured products, public and commercial services and employment opportunities. Meanwhile, villages are sometimes viewed as providers of raw and processed materials, labour and demand for urban services. In this view, cities and villages were treated in a binary way, especially in the developing world in the last century. Industrialization and modernization often dominated the national and international development agendas, while villages remained under-developed and disconnected from the social and economic development. With poor connections between cities and villages unimproved, millions of people in villages lacked access to basic infrastructure and services such as health, education, water, sanitation, transport and amenities. They lacked employment opportunities and social securities. They became victims of growing inequalities between cities and villages.

UN-Habitat and other development partners clearly reaffirm the economic, social and environmental interdependence between urban and rural areas. The need for a balanced and mutually supportive approach to the development of cities and villages is widely recognised. The sustainable development can only be achieved if rural and urban areas are considered holistically as part of the same and integrated system. The interdependence can only be increased with the growing flow of goods, capital, people, information between cities and villages.

UN-Habitat believes that we must mutually reinforce and support the development of cities and villages. This new paradigm of development necessitates the establishment of an efficient spatial strategy to incorporate rural development into a well-articulated, integrated and balanced urban-rural system. In doing so, villages can access clusters of services, facilities, infrastructures connected with cities.

To make urban rural development a reality, UN-

Habitat is encouraging countries to adopt pro-active policies and strategies for building better mobility and communications networks that link cities and villages, facilitating the better exchange of goods and services between urban and rural areas, better people's movement through short and long term migration from rural to urban areas and vice versa, better interaction between people with different social and cultural background, and better governance structure that integrate cities and villages in policy-making, revenue sharing and public participation.

I have noticed that Guangzhou, the most dynamic metropolitan city of South China, has been rapidly industrialized and urbanized in the past 30 years. This publication introduces the innovative visions and practices of Guangzhou to extend integrated development planning to its rural regions. It also showcases policies and actions taken by various stakeholders, including the leading role played by the local governments, the sound institutional arrangements and systematic approaches for programme design and implementation, and most importantly, the participation of rural villagers and their ownership of the programme. I am confident that this initiative will help bridge the development gap between urban and rural regions in Guangzhou, sustain the social and economic development and environmental improvement in rural areas, and improve the livelihoods of villagers in the future.

Therefore, I recommend this publication to all interested UN-Habitat partners, and call upon all those concerned about sustainable development to integrate rural development fully into their plans and bring a more integrated and inclusive perspective to urban and rural linkage.

**United Nations Under-Secretary-General
Executive Director of United Nations Human
Settlements Programme**

March, 2015



PREFACE TWO

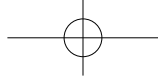
Guangzhou has been advancing its program of village planning for many years. It has made continuous efforts to explore innovative ways of village planning, both in terms of the formulation of village development plans and of village management and construction. Along the way, Guangzhou has made phenomenal achievements in village planning, achievements. Hereby, we would like to extend our gratitude to UN-HABITAT for giving us this opportunity to crystalize and analyze the experience that Guangzhou has gained in village planning over the years. It is our sincere hope that this book can help people understand Guangzhou's villages and its program of village planning. We look forward to valuable suggestions and advice on how we can improve our work in village planning in the future.

Villages are the very basic form of human settlement as well as the very basic unit in national economic and social management. Since China incepted its program of reform and opening up, its urbanization drive has been pressing forward at an extraordinary pace. Villages of China have been constantly evolving amidst the overriding trend of urbanization, which is marked by the changes of village forms and management models. In this process, some villages have been urbanized, becoming an integral part of cities; other villages, though able to maintain their original forms, have seen significant changes. With China still trapped in the urban-rural dual structure, the development of cities inevitably causes a number of problems to villages, including population outflows, landscape deterioration, a lack of infrastructural facilities and environmental pollution. As Guangzhou is at the forefront of China's reform and opening up, by taking a close look at the development history of Guangzhou's villages, one can develop a vivid and clear picture of how villages of China have developed and evolved and what problems and challenges are confronting the villages of other major cities in China.

Currently, Guangzhou has over 1,000 administrative villages under its jurisdiction, which together account for about 80% of its total land area. About three to four million people are now living and working in these 1,000 administrative villages. Historically, in China, rural planning was not valued and emphasized as much as urban planning for a long time, which explains why the rural area is now plagued by a series of grave issues. Guangzhou came to realization of the importance of village planning at the beginning of the 1990s, and since then, Guangzhou has carried out three rounds of village planning and has constantly strengthened the management and construction of villages along

the way. Since 2012 in particular, Guangzhou has been attaching great importance to and infusing innovative elements into its village planning in the process of its urbanization drive, under the overarching objective of achieving urban-rural integration and improving the quality of urbanization. On one hand, village planning program has been formulated to cover all villages under the jurisdiction of Guangzhou. On the other, a series of policies and regulations have been devised to ensure the implementation of the village planning program. In some sense, it is fair to say that Guangzhou has initially shaped a full-fledged system for village planning, management and construction. Specifically, this full-fledged system mainly consists of the following four building blocks.

First, the village planning program has covered all villages under the jurisdiction of Guangzhou, with strong emphasis placed on suiting planning policies and measures to the specific conditions of individual villages. We have divided all the administrative villages of Guangzhou into the following four categories, namely, inner-city villages, urban-fringe villages, outer-suburban villages and relocation villages. In the meantime, strenuous efforts have been exerted to explore the paths of development for the villages of each category. The objective is to achieve differentiated development and coordinated development by adopting measures that suit the local conditions of individual villages. For instance, where conditions permit, some villages may focus on developing manufacturing, some on developing agriculture, some on promoting tourism and others on fostering a livable environment. Specifically speaking, inner-city villages with readiness for transformation can set out to formulate plans for complete renovation and transformation, while inner-city villages unprepared to do so may formulate special plans to develop themselves into inner-city communities by improving their supplementary facilities and better integrating their overall structures into Guangzhou's cityscape. With full consideration given to the irreversible trend of extending economic and production activities to the suburban area, urban-fringe villages should make clear their functional positioning and make full preparations for accommodating economic and production activities. Outer-suburban villages are set to be developed into villages with idyllic landscape, which show the uniqueness and diversity of beautiful villages in China. While providing services to meet the basic needs of their residents, relocation villages should exercise self-control over the speed and scale of their own development and make preparations for future relocation of their residents to somewhere else.



Second, village planning has been focused on addressing and resolving problems of the greatest concern to local villagers. After many years of practice, Guangzhou has gradually shifted the focus of village planning from the overemphasis of environmental improvement to the realization of multiple goals. It is impossible and impractical to solve all problems simply by village planning, and therefore, the focus of village planning should be placed on working out constructive solutions to the problems of the greatest concern to local villagers, problems that have a strong bearing on agricultural production and daily life activities in villages. These major problems mainly touch on the following six areas: rural housing, the economic development of villages, the construction of supplementary facilities, agricultural development, rural eco-system and cultural inheritance. In regard to rural housing, focus has been placed on assigning rural land plots to the grown-up children of economically-strapped families for building new houses, transforming 400,000 mud-brick houses, transforming “hollow villages” (villages that cover an expansive land area but are inhabited by a very small rural population), rectifying illegal occupancy of land plots and punishing the households who illegally claim multiple homesteads (In China, as the land of a village is collectively owned by the villagers, a village household is only allowed to own one homestead according to law). As to the economic development of villages, the focus of planning has been placed on reducing the economic gaps among villages to a minimum by increasing the economic benefits generated by collectively-owned village land plots, blazing new trails to economic growth and implementing projects favorable for economic development. In regard to the construction of supplementary facilities, priorities have been given to allocating land plots for public facility construction, formulating supplementary standards, rendering guidance to villages on the establishment of high-level public service systems and advancing the equalization of basic public services. To promote agricultural development, efforts have been exerted to protect farmland, undertake researches on the development orientation, development patterns and development projects of agriculture, incentivize villagers to set up modern agricultural systems and promote the agricultural scale production, agricultural industrialization and sightseeing agriculture in the suburban areas of major cities. To restore and protect the ecological landscape and features, top priorities have been given to advancing the construction of eco-friendly infrastructural facilities and shaping distinctive Lingnan-style village structures that consist of “mountains, waters, rural housing and farmland”. In regard to cultural inheritance,

efforts have been focused on exploring the historical and cultural heritages of villages and formulating rules and regulations governing the protection and utilization of historical and cultural heritage sites.

Third, village planning has engaged the vastest majority of villagers. When it comes to village planning in Guangzhou, we have always put the interests of the villagers first. It is our beliefs that only by engaging villagers in village planning can we inject vitality into village planning and ensure the successful implementation of village development plans. On one hand, our planners pay field visits to villages and the houses of farmers, where they conduct on-the-spot inspections, carry out household surveys and hold meetings. Through these measures, our planners are able to get the hang of the status quo of villages, solicit opinions from the villagers and learn about the actual needs of the villagers. Initiatives are taken to engage villager representatives into a series of village planning procedures, including preliminary surveys and inspections, public opinion solicitation, pre-approval announcement and submission of development plans for approval. Tremendous efforts are being made to safeguard the villagers’ rights to know the facts, to express their opinions, to participate and to supervise, so that the villagers can truly become key players in village planning. On the other, we proactively disseminate and popularize basic knowledge of village planning. By simple and intuitive means, we have solicited opinions from the villagers and announce the planning results to the villagers. In this way, we ensure that the villagers can understand the planning details and have a holistic picture of what their villages will become, how their villages will be developed.

Finally, a long-term mechanism has been established for village planning. Long before such a long-term mechanism was established, village planning was just idle theorizing and window dressing. With constant improvements in its village planning, the traditional model of village planning and management has been utterly transformed into a brand-new model, a model that is underpinned by a long-term mechanism consisting of one cardinal task and six innovative ideas. The cardinal task refers to the imperativeness of addressing the needs of villagers. To foster a comprehensive understanding of villagers’ needs, surveys have been conducted in a flexible, efficient and productive way. Survey data and information have been input into information platforms to make the data and information accessible and renewable. The six innovative ideas respectively cover six respects, namely, scientific planning, policy



PREFACE

innovation, villager participation, formulation of planning rules and regulations, pilot project launch and development of theories. A full-fledged system has been set up to encompass various steps of village planning, from theorizing and policy making to implementation and management. Such a full-fledged system has enabled these village planning steps to be interlinked and complementary to each other. Under this system, feasible theories and policies are developed to ensure that the village planning program is implemented in real sense and to great depth. With this full-fledged system, the work related to village planning and management is being advanced in an orderly and well-regulated fashion.

We regard village planning as a one-hundred-year program and are endeavoring to formulate village development plans with strategic foresight, long-term development concepts and high standards. On one hand, a forward-looking approach should be adopted, with full consideration given to the long-term needs of the rural area. Enough leeway shall be reserved for future planning and maneuvering. In this way, a solid foundation will be laid for the future development of the rural area, and village plans can truly serve as guidelines for scientific development of the rural area. On the other hand, initiatives shall be taken to address the existing development challenges facing the rural area and to ensure that village development plans are put into implementation in real sense and produce desired effects.

Through theoretical analysis and case studies, this book -- Transformational Development and Coordinated

Planning --Practices of Guangzhou in Village Planning-- seeks to vividly and systematically introduce to the world the pioneering and innovative approaches and practices of Guangzhou in village planning. This book has opened a window, through which the world can take a close look at what Guangzhou has done in village planning and construction. Of course, village planning is a unique and protracted undertaking, one that takes persistent exploration and immense efforts to be accomplished. Some of the practices described in this book are yet to be tested by time and therefore should be further examined and tested against evidence. We hope that readers from around the world will be so kind to offer us suggestions and to point out whatever mistakes we have made.

The dream of Guangzhou and the China Dream are interlinked. To develop beautiful villages will go a long way toward realizing the dream of Guangzhou. Along this way, the program of village planning for beautiful villages will be the best footnote for the dream of Guangzhou.

(Chen Rugui)

**Executive Vice Mayor of the People's Government of
Guangzhou Municipality**

March, 2015



PREFACE THREE

As the frontier of reform and opening up, Guangzhou develops as one of the most urbanized cities in China. Due to its long-term and deep-rooted urban-rural integration, Guangzhou is faced with some unique difficulties and challenges in village planning.

Firstly, Guangzhou is burdened with grave historical problems. In the past 30 years' reform and opening up, the rural areas developed in a bottom-up "autonomous" model and lacked an overall planning in practices. At present, the villages are mainly frustrated by the historical problems accumulated over the past years. The heavy burden can only be alleviated via forceful organization and numerous innovative policies.

Secondly, it is difficult to implement land decrement. According to the relevant data, the villagers' residence accounts for 356.87 sq. km.; however, the Overall Plan of Guangzhou Land Utilization (2006-2020) requires that the residence should be reduced to 213 sq. km. by 2020, with around 10 sq. km. down each year. Without land use quota, it is hardly to implement the village plan, needless to say the land decrement. The reality barely meets the plan.

Thirdly, it is hard to survey on the existing village planning. Similar to other major cities, Guangzhou ill-performs homestead registration and certificate issuance. Owing to the heavy workload, complicated conflicts, lack of capital and human resource, the community-level land management department finds no incentive to register the homestead and issue certificates, which is trapped in slump.

The 18th CPC National Congress put forward the general principle of "promoting urban-rural integration and strengthening the ecological progress". Therefore, village planning embraces unprecedented opportunity, especially with the support of the "1+15" policy on new urbanization, issued by Guangzhou CPC Committee and

Guangzhou Municipality pay great attention to village planning. On 9th April, 2013, a senior-level mobilization meeting was held, which set up a leading group with the mayor as the group leader. 33 municipal leaders joined in to supervise the work in concrete village planning. 39 studies were carried out in 51 towns (sub-districts) and over 120 villages and almost 500 village officials were invited for talks.

On the other hand, it set up a working mechanism "led by municipality, charged by district government (county-level city), organized by town government (sub-district office) and participated by villagers". The top-down and bottom-up models are adopted to promote village planning. It has earned special fund of 131 million RMB and engaged 28 village planning institutes and over 600 planners into the planning, which stimulated the technical power to an all-time high.

Secondly, the villages are sorted into different categories, with innovative policies respectively.

In line with the requirement of urban-rural integration and the distinctive feature of each village, the villages in Guangzhou have been classified as urban villages (253), villages in urban-rural fringe (218), villages in outer suburb (621) and villages to relocate (50). Based on their actual situations, these villages perform the corresponding functions of "industry, agriculture, residence and tourism".

The village planning office has made targeted policies for different types of villages. There are five key documents, including Introduction to Guangzhou Village Planning (pilot), Work Guidance of Existing Village Planning Survey, Guideline on Guangzhou Village Planning Approval, Proposal of "Villagers' Engagement" in Guangzhou Village Planning and Requirement for Guangzhou Village Planning Achievement. Four technical documents have been issued, namely Technical Guidance on Guangzhou Village System Layout Planning (pilot), Introduction

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