

Analysis on the Risk of Rural Poverty and the Management Path of Preventing Poverty Return – A Case Study of Poor Households Filing and Card in Guangdong Province in 2020

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Abstract: In 2020, China has completed the battle to get rid of poverty with the goal of eliminating absolute poverty. However, many risks of inducing poverty in rural areas still exist. Controlling and responding to the risk of poverty is a key task to prevent the recurrence of poverty after poverty eradication. At present, the total risk of rural families has increased, the level of risk units has diversified, and the traditional risk and non-traditional risk coexist; rural risk not only has the commonness of risk trajectory, but also has the particularity of closer combination with natural factors and more prone to risk accumulation and superposition. Based on this, we should establish the concept of high-quality poverty alleviation, clarify the identification criteria for returning to poverty, establish an early warning mechanism for returning to poverty risk, and pay attention to the follow-up consolidation needs, so as to timely and effectively resolve the returning to poverty risk.

Keywords: Risk of returning to poverty; Monitoring and early warning; Anti-poverty risk management

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1. Introduction

In 2020, China won the battle to eradicate absolute poverty. In those areas that have just been lifted out of poverty, the long-standing geographical disadvantages need a long time to be improved, and many risks of inducing poverty in rural areas still exist. After 2020, China still needs to consolidate the results of poverty alleviation and prevent the return to poverty and the emergence of new poverty through a variety of means and mechanisms. In the proposal of the CPC Central Committee on formulating the 14th five-year plan for national economic and social development and the long-term objectives for 2035, adopted in October 2020, it is proposed to “improve the monitoring and assistance mechanism for preventing poverty return.”

Since the causes of poverty are very complex, and some poverty alleviation measures in the past have addressed the symptoms rather than the root causes, resulting in incomplete and unstable poverty alleviation, and even phenomena such as reducing poverty alleviation standards and digital poverty alleviation, there is a huge risk of returning to poverty among the people out of poverty. According to the information released by Guangdong Provincial People’s Government in **Table 1**, since the 18th CPC National Congress, the income of rural residents in Guangdong has increased year by year. The per capita disposable income of

poor households with labor force in the province increased from 3980 yuan at the end of 2015 to 16817 yuan, an increase of 323% over the end of 2015. The per capita disposable income of 2277 relatively poor villages were 20739 yuan, and the average collective income of villages reached 335000 yuan, an increase of 245% and 158% respectively compared with the end of 2015. Under the current standard, 1.615 million relatively poor people have been lifted out of poverty, and 2277 relatively poor people have taken off their hats. Such a huge base of people getting rid of poverty makes it more important to prevent the return to poverty. Therefore, how to consolidate the achievements of poverty alleviation, prevent the return of poverty and achieve a stable poverty alleviation is an important task facing the anti-poverty work in a long period of time in the future. We must rely on the party's political advantages and the organizational and mobilization advantages of the socialist system with Chinese characteristics, coordinate government, market and social resources, and accelerate the establishment of a long-term mechanism for firmly eradicating poverty.

Table 1. Income growth of rural residents in Guangdong in 2019 (Unit: Yuan)

| Indicator name | This year | Last year | Over the previous year | Increase (%) |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------------------|--------------|
| Disposable income | 18818.4 | 17167.7 | +1650.7 | 9.6 |
| Wage income | 9698.7 | 8510.7 | +1188.1 | 14.0 |
| Net operating income | 4446.9 | 4432.7 | +14.2 | 0.3 |
| Net income from property | 541.0 | 448.9 | +92.1 | 20.5 |
| Net income transferred | 4131.7 | 3775.5 | +356.3 | 9.4 |

Data source: Guangdong Rural Statistical Yearbook, 2020

2. Discussion on the concept of “poverty and return to poverty”

In the early practice of poverty reduction, the phenomenon of returning to poverty was common. In 1988, the poverty relief rate of 609 poor counties in China reached 89.7%, but a large number of people returned to poverty after getting rid of poverty. The areas returning to poverty are mainly concentrated in ethnic minority areas and deep poverty areas. Huang Zhiqiang,^[3] believes that the return to poverty is due to the low standard of poverty line and the failure of relief Poverty Alleviation Policies to stimulate the hematopoietic function of poverty alleviation. At the same time, returning to poverty is also related to the concept of poor households, infrastructure, Poverty Alleviation Policies, natural disasters, farmers' burden, social security, etc.^[2] The high vulnerability of low-income and poor people in rural areas is the main obstacle to stable poverty reduction^[1]. The direct inducement to return to poverty is the poverty alleviation method that destroys the local ecological environment^[5]. Therefore, to curb the return to poverty, we need to increase investment in infrastructure, develop various ways to help the poor, and improve the empowerment of poverty alleviation through science and technology.

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, scholars have conducted more research on poverty reduction from the micro level. From the perspective of livelihood assets, poverty alleviation ability and participation rights, they have put forward strategies to curb poverty reduction, such as building a scientific development coordination mechanism, poverty alleviation and development strategy, social security assistance system, disaster response ability of vulnerable groups and natural disaster management and control system^[4]. Zou Wei and Zheng Jie^[7] found that only improving the income level can prevent low-income households from returning to poverty, and early warning and selecting risk

mitigation tools can effectively avoid returning to poverty.

In short, the problem of returning to poverty has a long history, but the research on institutional arrangements to prevent returning to poverty is relatively weak. This paper combines the risk of rural poverty with the management of preventing return to poverty, and tries to establish a long-term mechanism to prevent return to poverty.

3. Re-recognition of the risk of poverty in rural areas: The coexistence of traditional risk and non-traditional risk

Under the current social background, the risk of poverty in rural areas is diverse. From the observation of the poor households who set up files and cards in Guangdong Province in 2020, the common rural poverty risks are natural, market, health, elderly risks, etc. With the increasing non-agricultural employment of rural residents, “difficulty in working” and other unemployment risks are becoming a common risk due to the dependence of rural families on non-agricultural employment income. Correspondingly, in the rural poverty risk, with the advancement of the modernization process, the traditional poverty risk categories still exist, and the new non-traditional risk is increasing, which has become a characteristic expression of the rural poverty risk at the present stage.

Traditionally, the two risks that have the greatest impact on farmers’ agricultural income are natural risk and market risk; Natural risks are caused by catastrophic changes in the natural environment, which will interrupt the stability of agricultural production activities, which has a devastating impact on the group with a single agricultural planting income as its economic source. Market risk is the price fluctuation in a small area due to the mismatch between supply and demand and information, resulting in the reduction of income. Health and old age risk are the two major risks that individuals always face in their life cycle. With the growth of individual age, its impact will become more and more significant. In the past, the threat of health risk to individuals was the occurrence of diseases and the difficulty of treatment, while the risk of old age was the low life expectancy and labor efficiency caused by comprehensive factors such as economic level and medical conditions. In rural areas, the problem of unemployment is not only the interruption of wage income under the framework of labor employment in industrial society, but also the hidden unemployment problem of low labor productivity.

After decades of modernization in all fields of society, the difference in development level and risk performance between rural and urban areas is narrowing. Through the popularization of science and technology and mechanization of agriculture, the direct impact of natural disasters on agricultural planting is decreasing. Instead, various environmental pollution problems caused by human improper transformation activities, such as the excessive use of pesticides, resulting in poor crop harvest; The factory does not discharge sewage according to the standard, resulting in excessive content of harmful substances in crops. The sales of agricultural products have reduced the risk of farmers’ loss due to the national “bottom-up” behavior and policy preference. At the same time, with the competitive pressure across regions and even borders brought by the prosperity of Internet trade, crops have changed from being affected by price fluctuations in small areas to being more and more affected by price fluctuations in the global market. The progress of medical technology and the continuous improvement of rural medical facilities have prolonged the life span of rural residents and improved the quality of life; With the development trend of increasing life expectancy, shrinking family size and social individualization, the problem of disabled care and lack of spiritual comfort of the rural elderly is becoming more and more common. Overall, the performance of rural risks is becoming more and more hidden, and the time difference between the initial behavior and exposure results of risks is increasing. Because “poverty” is a cross period and dynamic phenomenon, the performance of poverty in different periods is different, and the causes of poverty in different periods are also different. Only by finding the exact causes of poverty can we implement corresponding measures

according to the specific situation, fundamentally solve the problem of poverty and reduce the incidence of returning to poverty after getting rid of poverty. Therefore, when measuring the influencing factors and performance of poverty risk, it also needs to be analyzed from a cross period, cross space and dynamic perspective. This requires us to be more vigilant, keep pace with the times, and constantly explore the rural poverty risk in different stages of social development, so as to accurately implement the coping strategies and reduce the probability of returning to poverty.

4. Poverty prevention management from the perspective of risk management

In the past decades, rural areas have experienced a qualitative leap from low development level to rapid urbanization and rapid improvement of residents' income level. Accordingly, in the process of the development of rural poverty alleviation, the connotation of "risk response" of poverty alleviation measures is gradually expanding from the initial way of risk reduction and avoidance to today's way of risk sharing and management. In the fight against poverty, from agricultural insurance and rural social insurance to ad hoc "anti-poverty insurance," from order agriculture to agricultural product futures, and from early warning to system protection capacity (improvement of agricultural facilities, construction of cold chain warehousing, etc.), policies and measures of risk response types have also made important contributions to the fight against poverty. For example, in the overall assistance measures for the poverty-stricken villages where the poverty-stricken households in Guangdong Province are registered in 2020 (see **Table 2**), the responsibility "double guarantee" (unit village and cadre household) measures identify and respond to the poverty risk according to the regional risk; The comprehensive upgrading of village level infrastructure is to prevent environmental risks for regional and family units; The construction of village collective economy is to prevent, share and rescue family risks, while the measures such as financial aid for needy students, the construction of village clinics and the construction of cultural parks are to build an integrated management network for individual risks, such as identification, monitoring, sharing and rescue.

Table 2. Poverty alleviation measures and risk management focus analysis of poverty-stricken villages in Guangdong Province in 2020

| Main measures for poverty alleviation | Risk unit for | Risk management focus |
|---|----------------------------|--|
| Responsibility "double guarantees" (units include villages and cadres include households) | Region, family, individual | Poverty risk identification, monitoring and response |
| Village access road, farmland water conservancy, power grid transformation and broadband network construction | Region, family | Environmental risk prevention |
| Village collective economy (ecological breeding and cash crop planting) | Region | Environmental risk prevention |
| Technical training and industrial support | Family, individual | Unemployment risk prevention |
| Financial aid for students with financial difficulties | Individual | Risk sharing due to poverty |
| Construction of village clinics | Individual | Health risk identification, monitoring and response |
| Construction of cultural paradise | Individual | Health risk identification, monitoring and response |

At present, China is in the transitional period of successfully eliminating absolute poverty and entering a new stage of rural development. How to continuously increase the income of rural low-income groups and prevent the occurrence of new poverty problems is a problem that needs continuous and in-depth research and analysis. Those people who have been lifted out of poverty and families who have fallen into poverty due to illness will also face the impact of other new poverty causing factors, so there is still a certain risk of returning to poverty, Therefore, it is necessary to constantly explore new risk control policies and measures.

4.1. Establish the concept of high-quality poverty alleviation

We need to further deepen the business and technical training of grass-roots poverty alleviation workers, strengthen the awareness of precision poverty alleviation, and ensure that “identification can be made after stable poverty alleviation”. Achieving high-quality poverty alleviation can not only fundamentally reduce the risk of returning to poverty, but also reserve space for the role and function of later consolidation measures.

4.2. Establishment of poverty return risk early warning mechanism

Poverty alleviation departments should strengthen the interconnection with various industries and departments, and explore the establishment of a poverty return risk early warning mechanism. First, pay attention to poverty relief households that may return to poverty due to natural disasters, accidents and major diseases, especially in areas with high incidence of chronic diseases and frequent natural disasters^[6]. Second, pay attention to the development of poverty alleviation industry, set monitoring indicators from the three links of production, operation and sales, and focus on poverty alleviation households with production and operation as the main source of income. Third, pay attention to the employment situation of poverty-stricken families, especially those engaged in high-risk industries. Fourth, pay attention to the self-development motivation of poverty relief households and put an end to the phenomenon of “more help and more laziness.” Strengthen relevant technical training to improve the ability of poor households to resist accidents and natural disasters.

4.3. Pay attention to the subsequent consolidation needs

On the basis of establishing the early warning mechanism of poverty return risk, identify the poverty relief households that need to further consolidate the effectiveness of poverty alleviation. Survey the poverty relief households by means of dynamic visits for 6 months to 1 year, pay attention to their follow-up consolidation needs, form a consolidation system combining short-term, medium-term and long-term, and block the potential risk of returning to poverty and the actual situation of returning to poverty. In the short term, we should establish and improve the temporary relief mechanism for emergencies, provide support to poverty relief households with certain anti risk ability and help them tide over difficulties. In the medium term, for poverty relief households with stable income, we should start with broadening the sales channels of agricultural products, helping them go out to work, and providing information, technology and other support to ensure stable income growth. In the long run, only by establishing an organic link between effective poverty alleviation and Rural Revitalization can we ensure the sustainable development of rural areas and make the quality of poverty alleviation stand the test of history.

4.4. Learn from the experience of other provinces to achieve accurate poverty alleviation

As an important way of Rural Revitalization Strategy and targeted poverty alleviation, tourism has created unprecedented value. The “characteristic town + Leisure Tourism” model makes full use of high-quality tourism resources in the region to help targeted poverty alleviation. The promotion and improvement of the

tourism model of characteristic towns has brought benefits to a certain extent. For example, Yashan, Dayu County, Jiangxi Province, adjacent to Guangdong Province, has actively developed ecotourism resources, made rational use of the local unique geographical environment advantages, promoted the development of various characteristic industries according to local conditions, and built sports, exploration and development, recreational games, fitness and fitness Health care and other characteristic industries, while promoting industrial development, have also greatly promoted the progress of local poverty alleviation.

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