



*National Report on Mid-term Assessment  
of Education for All in China*

*National Center For Education Development Research*

*Chinese National Commission for UNESCO*

*November 2008*

## FOREWORD

Since the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien and the World Education Forum in Dakar, China has been actively participating in promoting Education for All. In order to materialize the developmental goals of Education for All, the Chinese Government, in various ways, has made solemn commitment to the “Declaration”, “Framework for Action”, and “Joint Action Plan” adopted by the related international conferences. In 2003, the Chinese Government formulated and promulgated *China’s Action Plan for Education for All*, which, on the basis of the 6 common commitments and 12 pledges specified in *The Dakar Framework for Action*, puts forward clear and concrete developmental goals and policy measures for China’s Education for All between 2001 and 2015 and makes an overall arrangement for this work.

The goals of social development and educational development that China has been actively pursuing are highly consistent with the developmental goals of Education for All advocated by UNESCO and the international community. The Chinese Government has included the arrangement for promoting Education for All in the general plan for national economic and social development and the plan for educational development, and has always treated Education for All as the priority field of educational development. With the joint efforts of the Government and the whole society, China has achieved world-acclaimed success in popularizing compulsory education, reducing illiterate population, lowering adult illiteracy rates, meeting the needs of youth and adults for life skills, and promoting educational equality, including gender equity.

In conformity with the requirements set by UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Asian and the Pacific Region for mid-term assessment of Education for All, and in light of the stage goals set by *China’s Action Plan for Education for All*, this report performs an all-round assessment of the progress with the 6 major goals of Education for All in China between 2001 and 2005, with 2000 as the base year for reference. To reflect the latest developments of Education for All in China, this report extends the time span of assessment to the year of 2006.

This report consists of ten chapters:

Chapter I The Social Background for Education for All

Chapter II The General Situation of Educational Development and the Implementation of China’s Action Plan for Education for All

Chapter III Child Care and Preschool Education

Chapter IV Popularization of Elementary Education

Chapter V Meeting the Needs of Youth and Adults for Life Skills

Chapter VI Adult Literacy

Chapter VII Gender Equity

Chapter VIII Promotion of the Quality of Elementary Education

Chapter IX Challenges, Goals and Countermeasures

Chapter X Improvement of the System and Mechanism for Promoting Education for All

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Appendix 3: List of Basic Data

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Since the World Conference on Education for All (EFA) in Jomtien and the World Education Forum in Dakar, China has been actively participating in promoting EFA. In order to materialize the developmental goals of EFA, the Chinese Government, in various ways, has made solemn commitment to the “Declaration”, “Framework for Action”, and “Joint Action Plan” adopted by the related international conferences. In 2003, the Chinese Government formulated and promulgated *China’s Action Plan for Education for All*, which, on the basis of the 6 common commitments and 12 pledges specified in *The Dakar Framework for Action*, puts forward clear and concrete developmental goals and policy measures for China’s Education for All between 2001 and 2015 and makes an overall arrangement for this work.

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## CHAPTER I: THE SOCIAL BACKGROUND FOR EFA

### 1.1 A SURVEY OF CHINA

#### 1.1.1 THE HISTORY, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS, AND ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION

China is one of the countries with the longest history in the world. After 1840, then feudal China was gradually turned into a semi-colonial and semi-feudal country. The 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed great and earth-shaking historical transformations of China. The Revolution of 1911, led by Dr. Sun Yat-sen, abolished the feudal monarchy and gave birth to the Republic of China. In 1949, the Communist Party of China with Chairman Mao Zedong as its leader founded the People's Republic of China.

China practices the socialist system. The Constitution of the People's Republic of China stipulates that all the power of the country belongs to the people and the National People's Congress is the highest organ of authority of the country. In politics, China adopts the system of multi-party cooperation and political consultation under the leadership of Communist Party of China. In economy, the country promotes the development of socialist market economy and practices with the basic economic system that the principal public ownership develops jointly with various ownerships.

Currently, the provincial-level administrative divisions of China include 4 municipalities directly under the Central Government, 23 provinces, 5 ethnic autonomous regions, and 2 special administrative regions, with Beijing as the nation's capital. Hong Kong and Macao are special administrative regions of China, and Taiwan is an inalienable part of Chinese territory.

#### 1.1.2 GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

China is located in the east of Asia and on the western coast of the Pacific Ocean. The country has a land area of 9.6 million square kilometers, a coastline of over 18,000 kilometers to the east and the south, and a water area of more than 4.70 million square kilometers for its inland and fringe seas. Totally 7600 islands distributed in the oceanic territories of the country, with Taiwan Island, of an area of 35,798 square kilometers, as the largest one. China shares a land border with 14 countries, and share sea borders with 8 countries. The terrain of China tilts from the west toward the east, with mountains, plateaus and hills accounting for 67% of the total land area while basins and plains accounting for 33%.



### 1.1.3 POPULATION

China is a developing country with the largest population in the world, accounting for about 1/5 of the world population. Based on the sampling statistics of 1% of the national population published by the National Bureau of Statistics of China, the total population (excluding that of Hong Kong and Macao SAR's and Taiwan Province) was 13.0756 billion at the end of 2005. The birthrate was 12.40‰; death rate, 6.51‰; and natural growth rate, 5.89‰. Compared with 2000, the population had increased by 3.2%, averagely 0.63% up per year. China is one of the densely populated countries in the world, but the distribution of its population is rather unbalanced: the population is very dense in the coastal regions in the east, but sparse in the plateau regions in the west.

In 2005, of the national population, the males took up 51.53% while the females, 48.47%, with the gender ratio standing at 106.30, 0.44 down from 2000. The ratio between urban residents and rural residents was 43 to 57, with the proportion of urban population growing by 6.77% compared with 2000. The ratio between the population of the Han nationality group and that of the minority nationalities was 90.6 to 9.4, and the latter has been growing faster than the former since 2000.

Along with the rapid development of education, the scientific and cultural quality of Chinese population has been significantly improved. Of the national population, the proportion of illiterates and people who have received no more than primary school education has gradually dropped, while that of the people who have received education of the secondary or a higher level has continuously ascended (See the Appendix). In 2006, the average number of years of education received by Chinese citizens was raised to 8.5 years, and that of the newly added labor force was increased to more than 10 years. However, compared with the international average level, especially that of the developed countries, the average number of years of education received by Chinese citizens and their scientific and cultural quality are still at a low level. In addition, obvious educational disparity exists between the urban and rural areas and among different regions and social groups.



Since the 1970's, the Chinese government has implemented the family planning policy across the country as a basic national policy, thus stabilizing the low birthrate, raising the population quality, improving the population structure, promoting the reasonable distribution of population, and boosting harmonious and sustainable development of population, economy, society, environment, and resources. The Chinese government has declared its aim to keep the population under 1.5 billion till 2020.<sup>1</sup>

The Chinese government has attached importance to developing the cause of public health and has continuously advanced the health levels of the population. The average life expectancy has been continuously increased, reaching 72.95 years in 2005, while the infant mortality rate has continuously declined, falling to 24.48‰ in 2005 (with the death rate of under-five children dropping from 250-300‰ when the People's Republic of China was newly established to 28.4‰ in 2004). The occurrence and death rates of epidemics, parasite illnesses, and endemics have both drastically declined. The newly diagnosed epidemics such as the SARS and bird flu have been effectively monitored and controlled, and noticeable progresses have been made in AIDS prevention and control.

In recent years, China has been actively promoting the urbanization of population and structural upgrade of industries, practicing the development strategy of boosting rural development with urban help and reciprocating agriculture with industrial support. The urbanization of population has been swelling at a rate over 1% each year. In 2005, the migrant population in China reached 147 million. With the population being urbanized at an annual rate of 1%, approximately another 300 million people will migrate out of the Rural till 2020. Numerous rural laborers have come to work in the cities, providing plenty labor force for the urban development as well as improving the rural economic conditions. Meanwhile, the massive migrant population has imposed tremendous strain on the infrastructure and public services of the cities and confronted the current Chinese society with some major challenges, including effective guarantee of the rights of the migrants such as their employment, education of their children, and their rights related to medical service and healthcare, social security, family planning, orderly flow and reasonable distribution of population, urban-rural coordination and regional balance in the process of development.

#### 1.1.4 LANGUAGE AND RELATED POLICIES

China has multiple ethnic minorities, spoken and written languages, with 56 minorities, over 80 spoken languages, and about 30 written languages. Chinese is the language with the largest population of users in China. The modern Chinese consists of the standard language (Putonghua) and dialects, with Putonghua as the official language according to law. Except for the Hui and Man ethnic groups that have adopted the Chinese language, the rest 53 minorities all have their own languages. The Chinese characters are used to record the Chinese language, and have had a history of about 6,000 years. Since the 1950s, China has renovated and simplified the current

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<sup>1</sup> See *The National General Plan for Scientific and Technological Development in a Medium and Long Term (2006-2020)* issued by the State Council on February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2006.

Chinese characters. The law stipulates that the standardized Chinese characters shall be the standard characters of the country.

While sticking to its basic language policies of popularizing Putonghua and promoting standardized Chinese characters, China has consistently upheld the policy of language equality and actively preserved the linguistic diversity, harmony and unification. In accordance with the laws including *The Constitution*, *The Law on Autonomy of Ethnic Regions*, and *The Law on the Standard Spoken and Written Chinese Language*, the spoken and written languages of all the ethnic minorities coexist on an equal basis, and no language discrimination, in whatever form, is allowed. All the ethnic groups have the freedom to use and develop their own spoken and written languages, which are mainly used in the fields of bilingual teaching, adult literacy, and press and news media. The Central Government encourages the ethnic groups to learn the spoken and written languages from each other.

#### 1.1.5 RELIGION

China is a country with a great diversity of religious beliefs, and the main religions are Buddhism, Daoism, Islam, Catholics, and Protestantism. In accordance with the Constitution, the citizens enjoy the religious freedom which is respected and protected by the government. All normal clerical activities performed by the clergy and all the normal religious activities held either at sites for religious activities or in believers' own homes in accordance with usual religious practices are protected by law as the affairs of religious bodies and believers themselves and may not be interfered with. According to the incomplete statistics, there are over 100 religious believers in China. Different religious organizations in China run their own affairs independently and set up religious schools, publish religious classics and periodicals, and run social services according to their own needs. As in many other countries, China practices the principle of separating religion from education; religion is not a subject taught in schools of the popular education in China. The various religious schools and institutes set up by the different religious organizations teach religious knowledge in line with their own needs.

#### 1.1.6 ETHNIC MINORITIES AND REGIONAL AUTONOMY

China is a united multi-ethnic state. There are 56 ethnic groups identified and confirmed by the Central Government. As the majority of population belongs to the Han ethnic group, China's other 55 ethnic groups are customarily referred to as national minorities. The national minorities, though small in numbers, are scattered over vast areas. Under the precondition of safeguarding the unity of the country, China practices the regional autonomy for ethnic minorities. At present, 44 ethnic groups enjoy the regional autonomy. Nationwide, there are 155 autonomous areas for ethnic minorities, namely 5 autonomous regions, 30 autonomous prefectures, 120 autonomous counties, and a total of more than 1500 ethnic townships. The areas under ethnic autonomy account for 64% of the total area of the national territory, and the ethnic population exercising autonomy accounts for 78% of the total population of the ethnic minorities of the country.



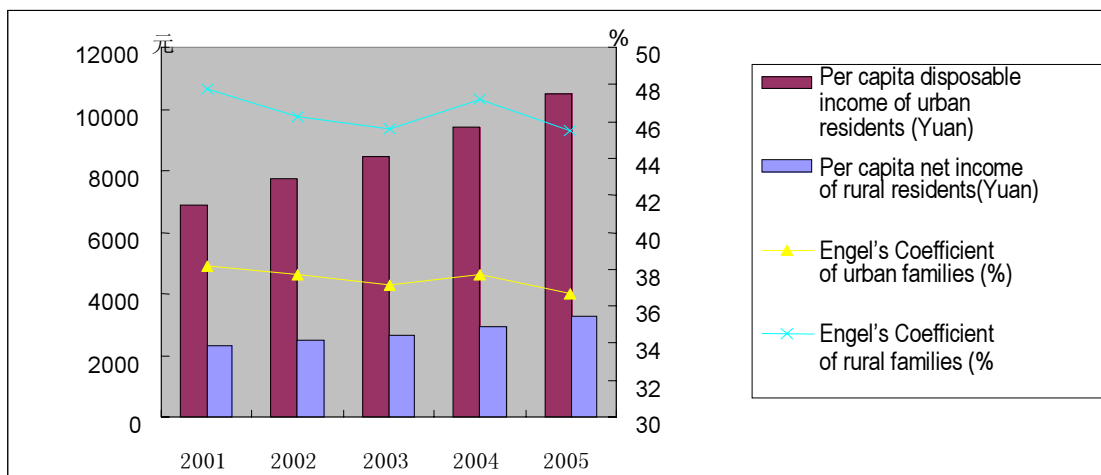
## 1.2 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### 1.2.1 LONG-TERM HIGH-SPEED ECONOMIC GROWTH

China is currently in an important transitional period of the modernization process, shifting from a traditional agricultural society to an industrial society and from the planned economy system to the socialist market economy system. Since the introduction of the reform and opening-up policy in late 1970s, China has sustained a rapid economic growth and achieved world-famous successes. Calculated in comparable prices, the GDP grew at an average annual rate of 9.7% and the GDP per capita at 8.5% between 1979 and 2006. In recent years, the Chinese economy has maintained a stable and rapid growth, with the continuous improvement of market mechanism and the drastic increase of the total volume of import and export. In the past 5 years, the GDP of China has been growing at an average annual rate of over 10%, higher than the world average for the same period. The economic strength of China has greatly increased. In 2006, with a GDP of RMB20.9407 trillion, China became the 4<sup>th</sup> largest economy of the world.

The national income per capita has grown rapidly and people's living standards have improved remarkably in China. The national income per capita exceeded 1,000 dollars for the first time in 2002, and exceeded 2,000 dollars in 2006. As the income of both urban and rural residents in China increases considerably, the Engel's Coefficient for both urban and rural families has steadily dropped, resulting in continuous decrease of impoverished population in the country. The rural population of absolute impoverishment of China was 250 million in 1978, with the rate of impoverishment occurrence (proportion of impoverished population) being 30.7%. The figures came down to 85 million and 9.4% in 1990, 32.09 million and 3.5% in 2000, and further down to 21.48 million and 2.3% in 2006.

Figure 1.1 Improvements of Living Standards for Chinese Residents between 2001 and 2005



### 1.2.2 PERIODIC FEATURES OF CHINA'S DEVELOPMENT

Along with its rapid economic development, China has also made world-famous achievements in political, cultural and social construction/development. The incomes of the residents, both urban and rural, have increased significantly and their living standards have remarkably improved, and the basic living of the impoverished population is guaranteed. New progresses have been made in building the democratic and legal systems, and the reform of the political system has been implemented at a steady pace. The public spiritual life has become more colorful. More employment opportunities are available, and the social security system has been further consolidated.

In the new century, the development of China has entered a new period and now assumes a series of new periodic characteristics, namely: with the significant improvement of the economic strength, the productivity level is generally still low, the ability of independent innovation remains weak, and the structural conflict and the extensive growth pattern formed over a long time have not been fundamentally overcome; whereas the mechanism of socialist market economy has been basically established, the development still faces barriers imposed by the systems and mechanisms, and the reform has come to its crucial stage and is confronted with in-depth conflicts and problems; whereas the people can generally live a well-off life, the trend of increasing disparity in income distribution has not been essentially reversed, the size of impoverished and low-income population, both urban and rural, is still considerable, and it has become harder to make an overall consideration of the interests of different sides; whereas impressive progresses have made in coordinate development, the basis of agriculture remains inadequate and agricultural development still lags behind, and it is a formidable task to narrow the gap between the urban and rural areas and that between different regions so as to promote harmonious development of economy and society; whereas socialist democratic politics has advanced continuously and the basic strategy of ruling the country according to law has been implemented substantially, the construction of democratic and legal systems still cannot fully meet the needs of economic and social development, and the reform of political system needs to be deepened; whereas the socialist culture has grown more prosperous, the people have a daily stronger spiritual and cultural aspiration and their thinking shows obviously higher levels of independence, selectiveness, variability, and diversity, raising higher demands for the development of advanced socialist culture; whereas the society has become remarkably more dynamic, the fundamental changes have taken place to the structure and organization of society and the composition of social interests, thus presenting many new issues for social construction and administration; whereas the opening-up scope has been expanded, the country is confronted with increasingly fiercer international competition, the long-term pressure imposed by the economic and technological dominance of the developed countries will remain for a long time, which increases risks, predictable or unpredictable, and leads to a more demanding task to coordinate the domestic development and the opening-up to the outside world.

## CHAPTER II: THE GENERAL SITUATION OF/A SURVEY OF EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF CHINA'S ACTION PLAN FOR EDUCATION FOR ALL

### 2.1 GENERAL SITUATION OF EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Prior to the foundation of People's Republic of China in 1949, the educational basis of China was fairly weak, and the enrollment rate for basic education was only around 20% and the illiteracy rate among the national total population exceeded 80%.<sup>2</sup> After the establishment of the People's Republic of China, the Central Government gradually improved its education system and achieved tremendous progress in its educational cause. Through vigorous efforts to popularize the basic education and promote the illiteracy elimination, China reached an ever-higher level of national basic education. In 1980, the national enrollment rate of elementary schools for school-age children reached 93%. The statistics of the national census indicated that the rate of adult illiteracy declined to 31.9% and the average education years for the population aged 15 or above reached 5.3 years in 1982.

Since China implemented the reform and opening-up policy in 1978, Chinese education has entered the fast track of development. The enrollment rates for schools of different types at all levels swiftly climbed, people enjoyed substantially more opportunities to receive education, and the average national education years also continued to rise. In 1986, China promulgated *The Law on Compulsory Education* and began to implement the 9-year compulsory education. In 1993, the Chinese Government issued *The General Plan for Educational Reform and Development* and proposed the goal of "basically popularizing the 9-year compulsory education and basically eliminating illiteracy among youth and mid-aged population". Through the joint efforts of the government and the whole society, China fulfilled this goal as scheduled. In 2000, the Two Basic Education had been realized in the counties with over 85% of the national population. From 1990 to 2000, the net enrollment rate of children of primary school age increased from 97.8% to 99.1%; the gross enrollment rate of the junior middle school rose from 66.7% to 88.6%; the illiteracy rate for population aged 15 or above dropped to 9.1%, and their average number of education years increased to 7.85.

As indicated in *the 2006 Global Monitoring Report for Education for All*<sup>3</sup> issued by UNESCO, the Educational Development Index (EDI) for Education for All of China was 0.954 in 2002, ranking 38<sup>th</sup> among all the 121 countries monitored, 16 places up from the 54<sup>th</sup> in 2001. Specifically, the index of the general net enrollment rate of primary education was 0.957, the adult literacy index was 0.909, the gender disparity index was 0.959, and the fifth grade survival rate was 0.990. The Chinese EDI for Education for All was not only higher than the other countries with large populations, but also higher than that of some high-income countries.

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<sup>2</sup> See Page 1 of *The Education of the People's Republic of China during the Past 50 Years* compiled by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China.

<sup>3</sup> See *The 2006 Global Monitoring Report for Education for All* issued by the UNESCO.

Between 2001 and 2005, Chinese education has experienced a rapid development. The enrollment rates for education of different categories and levels further ascended, the teaching conditions improved significantly, and the educational quality reached a higher level. The 9-year compulsory education was popularized in a wider range, and the adult illiteracy rate continued to decline. Vocational education and training witnessed a fast development, and more than 150 million person-times of urban and rural laborers participated in the vocational training each year. The tertiary education entered a popularized development stage.

In 2006, 96% counties in China, which had 98% of the total population, realized the goal of “basically popularizing the 9-year compulsory education and basically eliminating illiteracy among youth and mid-aged population”. The net enrollment rate for children of primary school age rose further to 99.27%; the gross enrollment rate rose to 97% for the junior middle school stage, 59.8% for the senior middle school stage, and 22% for tertiary education; up to 3.66 million person-times finished the non-formal tertiary education of various forms and 65.08 million person-times finished the non-formal secondary education. The average national education years increased to 8.5 years.

At present, China has the largest education population in the world, and the enrolled population in different schools at all levels surpasses 200 million.

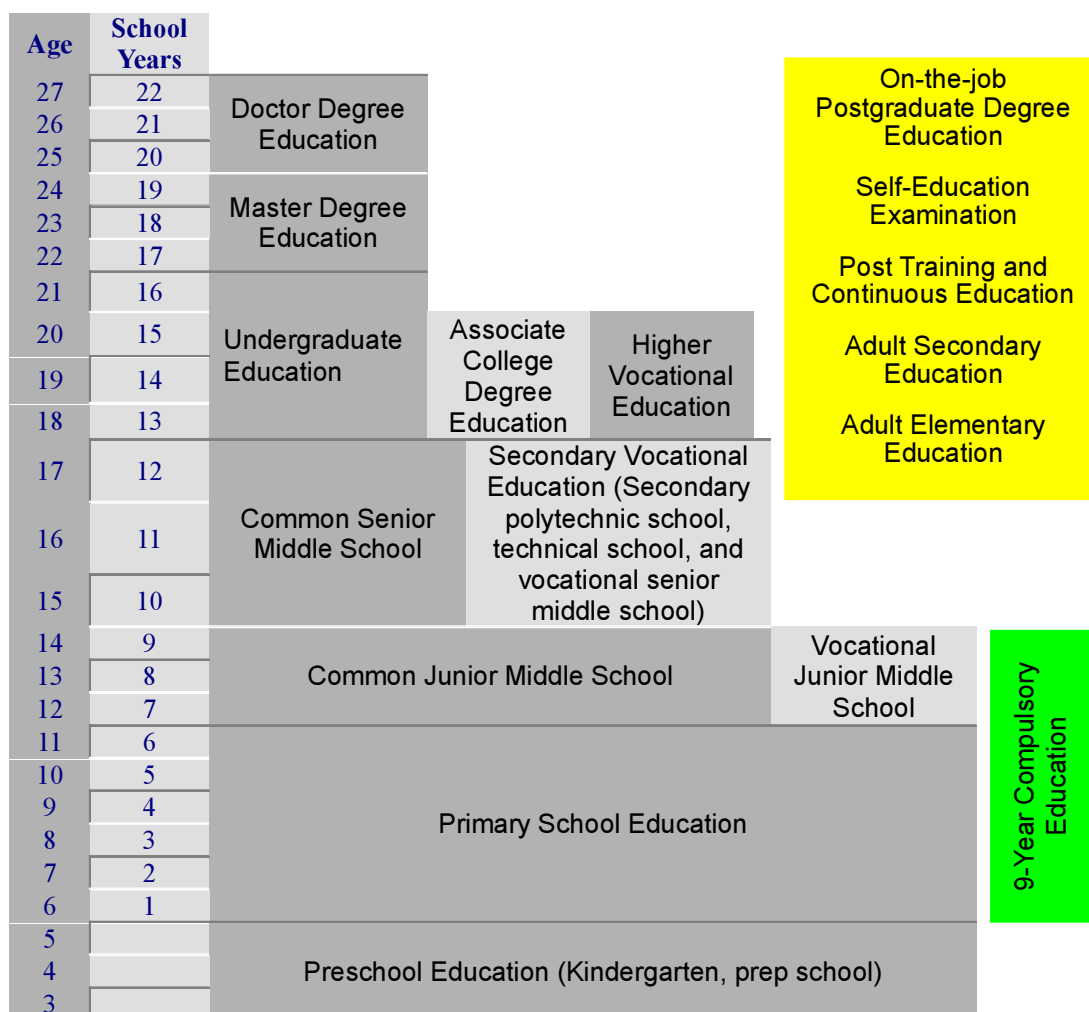
## 2.2 BASIC EDUCATION SYSTEM

China provides the preschool education, 9-year compulsory education, senior middle school education, tertiary education, vocational education, and adult education, and implements the systems of educational examination, educational certification, academic degrees, professional qualification certificates, and educational supervision and assessment. Since the 1980s, China has enacted a series of educational laws and regulations, including *The Law on Education*, *The Law on Compulsory Education*, *The Law on Teachers*, *The Law on Vocational Education*, *The Law on Higher Education*, *The Regulations on Academic Degrees*, *The Law on the Standard Spoken and Written Chinese Language*, and *The Law on Promotion of Privately run Schools*, as well as a number of administrative regulations such as *The Regulation on Elimination of Illiteracy*, *The Regulation on Education for the Handicapped*, *The Regulation on Teaching Qualification*, and *The Regulation on Kindergarten Administration*. These systems and laws are an important guarantee for promoting the healthy development of the education, ensuring the public access to education, and facilitating the education for all.

The Chinese government attaches much attention to the civil right of education and the equality of educational opportunities. The governments at all levels have taken various measures to ensure the enrollment of school-age children and teenagers, help the students in need for education access, and provide the opportunities for the citizens for the vocational education and vocational training of all forms. To ensure the equality of educational opportunities, the special support has been given to the educational development of the remote and poverty-stricken areas and the minority areas, as well as the disadvantaged groups such as the students from financially strained families, the handicapped, and the minority students.

The current school system of China is shown in the following chart. The formal school system comprises of: the kindergarten (3 to 5 years old); the 9-year compulsory education, consisting of primary education and junior secondary education (in most provinces, the primary education lasts for 6 years and the junior secondary school lasts for 3 years, but in a small number of provinces, the periods are respectively 5 and 4 years, and according to *The Law on Compulsory Education*, children begin their primary school education at the age of 6 or 7.); the senior secondary education comprising of the common senior middle school education and the secondary vocational and technical education (including vocational senior middle schools, secondary polytechnic schools, and technical schools); the tertiary education consisting of undergraduate education (4 years), associate college degree education and higher vocational education (2-3 years); and postgraduate education (including master degree education for 2-3 years and doctoral degree education for 3 years). The adult education system comprises of the adult elementary education (including the literacy classes), the adult secondary education, and the adult tertiary education, and the formal education or training for adults mainly in the non-formal ways.

**The School System of China**



### 2.3 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY OF REJUVENATING THE NATION THROUGH SCIENCE AND EDUCATION AND THE STRATEGY OF EDUCATION PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT

As the most populous developing country in the world, the Chinese Government has realized that education plays a fundamental, leading, and overall role in the social development, and that only through the vigorous development of the education and the development of the human resources can China, having limited natural and material resources, transform its heavy population burden into the advantages of human resources and boost the sustainable development of economy and society. In the past 10 years, through adopting the strategies of “rejuvenating the nation through science and education” and depending on talents to build a strong country, China has taken educational development and human resources development as its priorities, and regarded education as the priority of public policies during the course of economic and social development. In 2005, Hu Jintao, the CPC Secretary General, emphasized: the country must unwaveringly implement the strategies of “rejuvenating the nation through science and education” and depending on talents to build a strong country, effectively give education the priority for development, pursue an all-round, harmonious and sustainable development of the educational cause, and try to build China into a powerful country of human resources, so as to provide the guarantee of talents and human resources for the mission of building a well-off society in an all-round way and realizing the great renaissance of the Chinese Nation.

To realize the priority development of education, the Chinese Government proposed that the growth of financial educational funds shall significantly outpace the growth of regular revenues, and the financial educational funds shall gradually reach a scale of 4% of the GDP. In the past several years, the Chinese Government has made efforts to increase the investment in the public education, and preferentially used the increased public education funds for the education for all including the popularization of the compulsory education, lending strong support to the sustainable development of education for all.

### 2.4 COMMITMENTS OF THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT TO EFA AND ITS ACTIONS

China highly values education for all, and has actively participated in the progression of education for all of the international community. The delegations of the Chinese Government attended all the international conferences related to education for all held by the United Nations or its affiliated organizations, including the World Conference on Education for All (1990), the World Children Summit (1990), the World Conference on Human Rights (1993), the 5<sup>th</sup> World Women Conference (1995), the International Conference on Child Labor, all the sessions of conferences on education for all for E-9 countries, the World Summit (1996), and the Dakar World Forum on Education (2000), and has made solemn commitments to the Declaration, Framework, and Action Plan adopted by the international conferences.

Since the Dakar World Forum on Education in 2000, the Chinese Government has taken a series of actions, including:

--carrying out extensive and in-depth publicity of the conception of education for all and the commitment of the Chinese Government, in a variety of ways;



- setting up the national forum on education for all to strengthen the interdepartmental coordination on education for all;
- formulating and promulgating *China's Action Plan for Education for All (2001-2015)* in 2003;
- holding the Education Ministerial Meeting for E-9 Countries in Beijing in August 2001;
- holding in Beijing the 5<sup>th</sup> High-Level Meeting on Education for All of UNESCO (2005) with a theme of literacy and education in the rural areas.
- issuing the National Report on Education for All in China (2005)
- successfully holding the Regional Conference on Literacy in Asia and Pacific sponsored by UNESCO in Beijing in July 2007;
- holding a national meeting on the work of elementary education (2001), a national meeting on the work of ethnic education (2002), and two national meetings on the work of vocational work (2002, and 2005);
- successively issuing a series of decisions and orders, including *The Decision of the State Council on the Reform and Development of Elementary Education* (2001), *The Decision of the State Council on Vigorously Advancing the Reform and Development of Vocational Education* (2002), *The Notice by the Office of General Affairs of the State Council on Improving the Administrative Mechanism for Compulsory Education in the Countryside* (2002), *The Decision of the State Council on Further Strengthening the Educational Work in the Countryside* (2005); and formulating a sequence of documents, including *The 10<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan for the Educational Cause of China*, *The General Plan on Children Development in China (2001-2010)*, *The General Plan on Kindergarten Education and Guidance*, *The Guiding Opinion on the Reform and Development of Kindergarten Education* (2003), *The Opinion on the Work of Illiteracy Elimination during the "10<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan" Period*, *The Opinion on Further Carrying Out the Reform and Development of Special Education during the "10<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan" Period*, *The Opinion on the Reform and Development of the Education for Teachers during the "10<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan" Period*, and *The General Plan on the Curriculum Reform of Elementary Education*.

## 2.5 ISSUING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF CHINA'S ACTION PLAN FOR EFA

As required by *The Dakar Framework for Action*, the Chinese Government formulated *China's Action Plan for Education for All (2001-2015)* in 2003. In reference to the planning period for education for all proposed by UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Asian and the Pacific as well as the planning period of China for economic, social and educational development, this plan has 2001 as the starting year and 2000 as the base year for reference, and put forwards 6 major goals and main policy measures for Education for All during two planning cycles, 2001-2005 and 2006-2015 respectively.

*China's Action Plan for Education for All* not only provides a framework and the concrete goals for given stages for Education for All in China, but also supplies an operable policy basis, so that it greatly facilitates the implementation of the plan for Education for All. This action plan has been well implemented, and most of the stage goals it sets for 2005 have been realized. China has made noticeable progresses in the popularization of compulsory education, the reduction of illiterate population, the enhancement of skill training, the reduction of gender disparity, and the raising of the quality of elementary education.

## 2.6 ESTABLISHMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE POLICY COORDINATION MECHANISM FOR EFA ALL

The Promotion of Education for All concerns many departments within the government as well as various non-governmental organizations. Therefore, it is crucial to establish an effective mechanism for the coordination and cooperation among different governmental departments and governments of different levels and between the governmental departments and the non-governmental organizations. In order to coordinate the educational policies of different departments, strengthen the interdepartmental cooperation, and facilitate the development of Education for All, China has established some corresponding policy coordination mechanisms. The national-level coordination mechanisms mainly include the following:

### 2.6.1 Leadership Group on Science, Technology and Education of the State Council

Established in 1998, its main duties are: to research and review the national strategy and major policies on the development of science, technology and education; to discuss and audit the important tasks and programmes of science, technology and education; and to coordinate different departments of the State Council and the local governments on major issues concerning science, technology and education. The head and co-heads of the group are respectively the premier and vice premiers of the State Council, and the members include the director of the National Development and Reform Commission, the ministers of education, science and technology, finance, and agriculture, and the president of Chinese Academy of Sciences. The office of the leadership group is located at the Office of General Affairs of the State Council, with the Secretary General of the State Council acting as the Office Director.

### 2.6.2 Leadership Group on Striving for the "Two-Basic Education" Goal in the West of China

The group was established in December 2003. Its head is the councilor of the State Council in charge of education, science and technology, and culture, and its co-heads are the minister of education and the deputy secretary general of the State Council. Its members include the relevant leaders from the National Developmental and Reform Commission, the ministers of finance, agriculture, and science and technology, the Office of Western China Development of the State Council, and the Office of Poverty Relief of the State Council. The office of the leadership group is located at the Ministry of Education, with one vice-minister of the Ministry of Education as the office director.

### 2.6.3 The Interdepartmental Joint Meeting Mechanism for Vocational Education

The mechanism was launched in 2004. The Minister of Education acts as the convener of the joint meeting, and the attendants include the relevant leaders from 7 departments, namely, the ministries of education, finance, personnel, labor and social security, and agriculture, the National Development and Reform Commission, and the Office of Poverty Relief of the State Council. The function of this joint meeting is to coordinate the work of vocational education in the country, and to facilitate the guidance, coordination, exchange and implementation of policies on vocational education. The office of the joint meeting, which takes charge of the daily affair, is located at the Ministry of Education.

#### 2.6.4 National Interdepartmental Coordination Group on Literacy

Established in 1994, the group is responsible for the macro guidance and inspection of the literacy work, motivating the whole society to support and participate in this effort. The head and co-heads of the group are minister and vice-ministers of the Ministry of Education, and the group members include the relevant leaders of All China Women's Federation, the Central Committee of Chinese Communist Youth League, the Department of Publicity of the CPC Central Committee, the ministries of culture and agriculture, the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television, the National Commission on Ethnic and Religious Affairs, the Department of Politics of PLA Central Committee, and China Association of Science and Technology. The office of the coordination group is located at the Ministry of Education.

#### 2.6.3 Leadership Group on Public Scientific Quality

Established in March 2006, the group mainly performs the following duties: to provide macro guidance for the implementation of *The General Action Plan on Scientific Quality of Citizens*; to research and formulate major policies to boost the implementation of the said action plan, and coordinate and solve the main problems encountered during its implementation; and conduct supervision and inspection of the work of local governments and various departments. A councilor of the State Council shall act as the head of the group, and a vice-chairman of China Association of Science and Technology shall act as its co-head. The members of the group include the deputy secretary general of the State Council and the relevant leaders of the Department of Organization and the Department of Publicity of CPC Central Committee, the National Development and Reform Commission, the ministries of education, science and technology, finance, personnel, agriculture, and labor and social security, the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Chinese Academy of Engineering, the Natural Sciences Foundation, All China Federation of Trade Unions, the Secretariat of the Central Committee of Chinese Communist Youth League, All China Women's Federation, and China Association of Science and Technology, where the office of the leadership is located.

#### 2.6.4 China Forum on Education for All

In conformity with the requirement of the Dakar Conference, in order to establish the EFA coordination mechanisms between departments and between the governmental organs and non-governmental organizations, China has launched the "China Forum on Education for All" sponsored by the Ministry of Education and China National Commission for UNESCO. The

members of the forum, besides the sponsors, include mainly the National Commission of Development and Reform, the ministries of finance, labor and social security, agriculture, health, and civil affairs, and the National Commission of Ethnic and Religious Affairs, as well as non-governmental and social groups such as All China Women's Federation, All China Federation of Youth, All China Federation of Trade Unions, China Association of Science and Technology, and China Children and Teenagers Foundation.

On December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2003, the first China Forum on Education for All was held in Beijing, China, of which the theme was to solicit related departments for their opinions on *China's Action Plan for Education for All*. After this event, the Chinese Government announced the said action plan.

Between December 12<sup>th</sup> and December 15<sup>th</sup> of 2004, the second session of China Forum on Education for All was held in Beijing. At this session, the participants obtained a fuller knowledge of the EFA Seminar for Asian and the Pacific, the 47<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Education, and the monitoring indicators of education for all, conducted group discussion of the plans of various Chinese provinces and municipalities for education for all, rural education, and education quality, and proposed specific working plans and suggestions.

Between January 1<sup>st</sup> and January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2006, Chinese National Commission for UNESCO and UNTG co-sponsored the third session of China Forum on Education for All in Beijing. The theme of the session was to conduct exchange on the progresses in the interim assessment of the 10-year program of Education for All and discuss the key areas for future international cooperation. More than 100 people attended the forum. They were from the related departments and commissions of the Central Government, social organizations, 11 provinces and autonomous regions, and international organizations based in China.

These meetings of China Forum on Education for All not only facilitated interdepartmental coordination and cooperation in EFA implementation, but also played an active role in popularizing the EFA concept in the society and forming EFA consensus, thus strongly boosting EFA implementation in China.

## CHAPTER III: EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION (ECCE)

### 3.1 EVER HIGHER PARTICIPATION IN CHILDREN EDUCATION

Since 2001, the preschool education of China has taken on a larger scale. The gross enrollment rate of preschool education for children aged between 3 and 6 has consistently advanced, reaching 41.4% in 2005 and 42.5% in 2006. The proportion of the first graders in primary school who have received preschool education has increased year after year, reaching 83.4% in 2005 and 84.7% in 2006, which was 4.8 percentage points higher than 2001. In urban areas, the figure has hit 90%. And the gap between the central and western regions and the eastern region has been narrowed to some extent. Generally speaking, children education is gradually being popularized in China, and most children have the opportunity to receive at least one year of preschool education before they enter the primary school.

Figure 3-1 Changes of Enrollment Rate of Preschool Education (%)

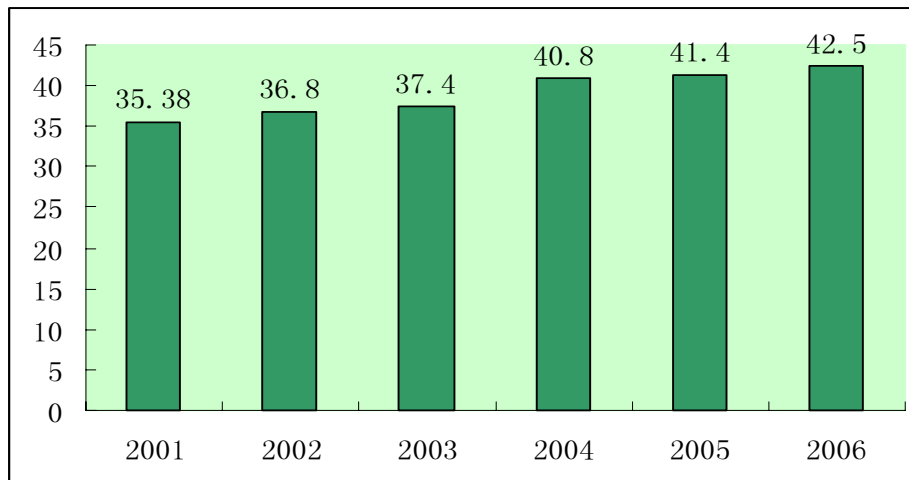
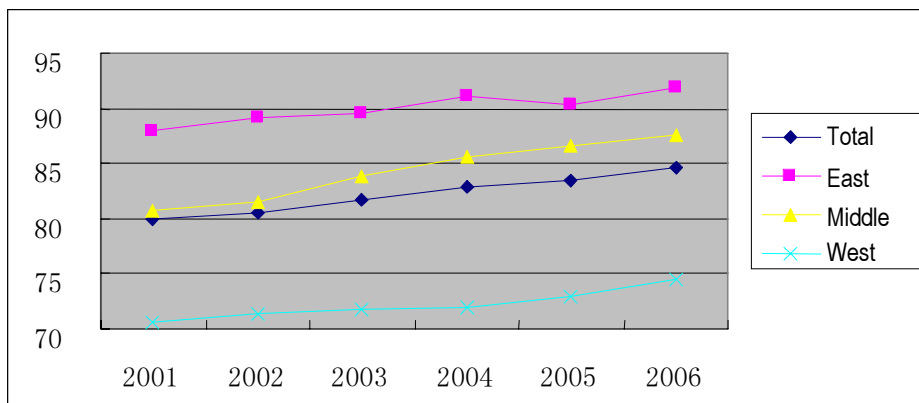


Figure 3-2 Proportion of First Graders of Primary School Having Received Preschool Education (%)



### 3.2 IMPROVED SUPPLY OF TEACHERS FOR CHILDREN EDUCATION

From 2000 to 2006, Chinese teachers for children education became more professional. Across the country, the proportion of the full-time kindergarten teachers who graduated from the children education major rose drastically by nearly 20%. Though showing a trend of narrowing, the gap between the western and central regions and the eastern region is still serious.

Since 2001, the student-teacher ratio of kindergartens of China has been decreasing in general. However, tremendous differences still exist between the central and western regions and the eastern region and between the urban and the rural. Especially, in the Rural, the student-teacher ratio of kindergartens is as high as 55: 1, far exceeding the limit set by the government and severely impeding the improvement of children education in rural areas. This phenomenon originates in lack of outlays for Rural kindergartens and the resulting management strategy of reducing costs by hiring fewer teachers.

Figure 3-3 Proportion of Full-time Kindergarten Teachers Who Are Graduates of Children Education Majors (%)

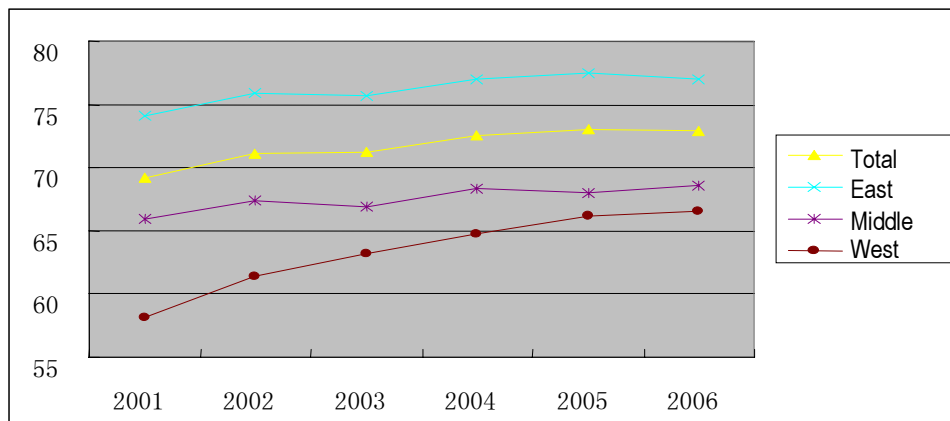
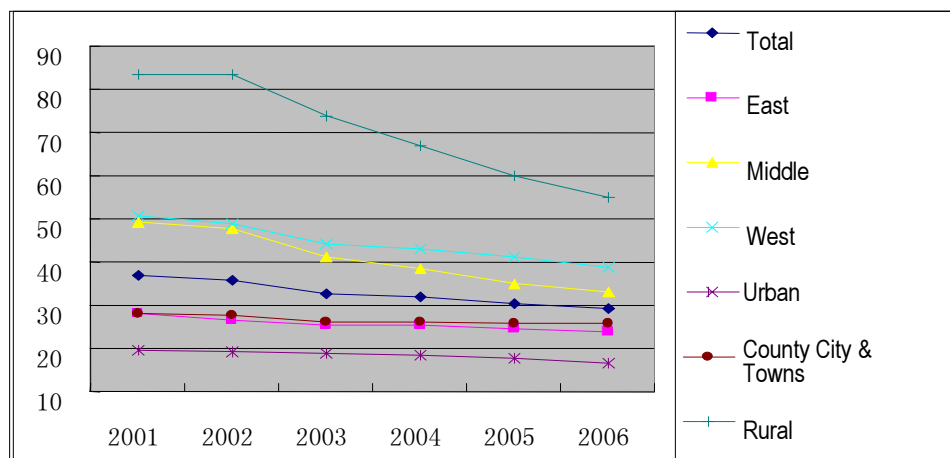


Figure 3-4 Proportion of Student-Teacher of Kindergartens



### 3.3 STRONGER GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT BY GOVERNMENT TO CHILDREN EDUCATION

In March 2003, the Office of General Affairs of the State Council forwarded *The Guidance Opinion on the Reform and Development of Children Education* jointly formulated by the Ministry and other departments. This document specified the goals of the reform and development of children education, and raised more specific requirements on improving the system and mechanism for administration of children education, implementing quality-oriented education in an all-round manner, promoting the quality of children education, and building a stronger team of teachers for children education. As a result, it has played an important role in guiding the reform and development of children education of the country.

Some local governments have enhanced their guidance and support to the development of children education, substantially performed their duty for development of children education, especially the preschool education in the Rural, stuck to the policy of mainly depending on public investment to operate rural kindergartens, used preschool education development as a standard for assessing the performance of town and township governments, and upheld the policy direction of operating high-quality kindergartens at low prices. Some local governments have actively explored the new systems for administration of children education in the Rural, clearly laid the responsibility for developing rural children education on the county-level and township-level governments, and advocated holding diverse forms of village-sponsored kindergartens (classes) mainly with support from the village committees so as to create opportunities for the Rural children to receive preschool education. Some local governments have adjusted the personnel establishment of teachers paid from financial finance, and paid sufficient consideration to the need of kindergarten teachers in allocating teaching resources. And some local governments even provide various forms of support, such as pension and Medicare, to teachers who are paid from public finance but qualified in related assessment.

### 3.4 DEVELOPMENT OF VARIOUS FORMS OF RURAL PRESCHOOL EDUCATION ACCORDING TO LOCAL CONDITIONS

The Rural is the key and also difficult area for popularizing preschool education due to scattered inhabitation, scarce outlays, and inadequate knowledge of parents. The Chinese Government encourages developing preschool education in the Rural in various forms in order to speed up popularization of children education. For instance, some places have transformed the school buildings that are idle after adjustment of local middle and primary schools into kindergartens, and re-trained the redundant teachers laid off by primary and middle schools as kindergarten teachers. This has not only brought into play the idle educational resources, but also boosted the local children education. At the mountainous rural areas, many usual forms, such as holiday classes, one-teacher itinerate teaching, circuit guidance stations, weekend game groups, elder children teaching younger ones, family guidance stations, and mother-children activities centers, have been adopted to provide more opportunities for rural children to receive preschool education.

To set up affiliated preschool classes at the primary schools is an important measure to popularize children education in China. The preschool class usually enrolls the children bound for primary

school one year later. Though the proportion of preschool classes in children education has generally declined in recent years, preschool classes are still a major form of preschool education and play an important role in increasing the enrollment rate of children education. In 2005, the students of preschool classes accounted 52.62% of all the newly enrolled students of kindergartens, and 39.26% of all the kindergarten students. In the rural areas of certain provinces, the students of preschool classes accounted for up to 90% of the kindergarten students.

Figure 3-5 Proportion of Children of Preschool Classes in All Kindergarten Students (%)

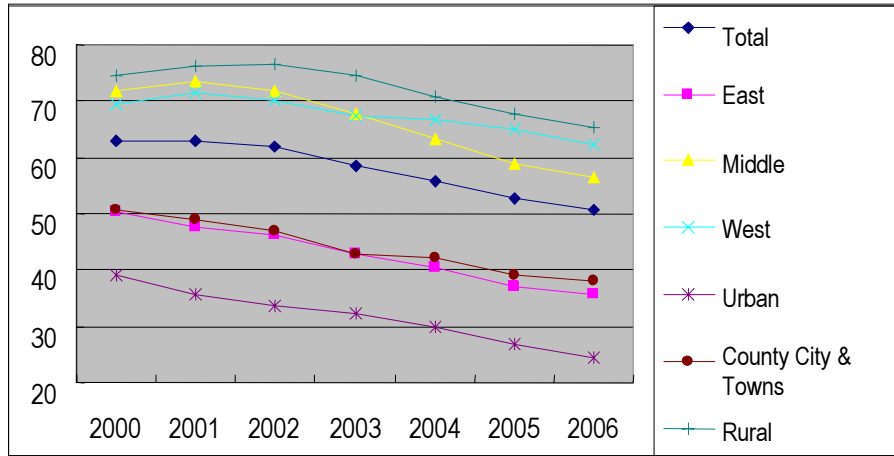
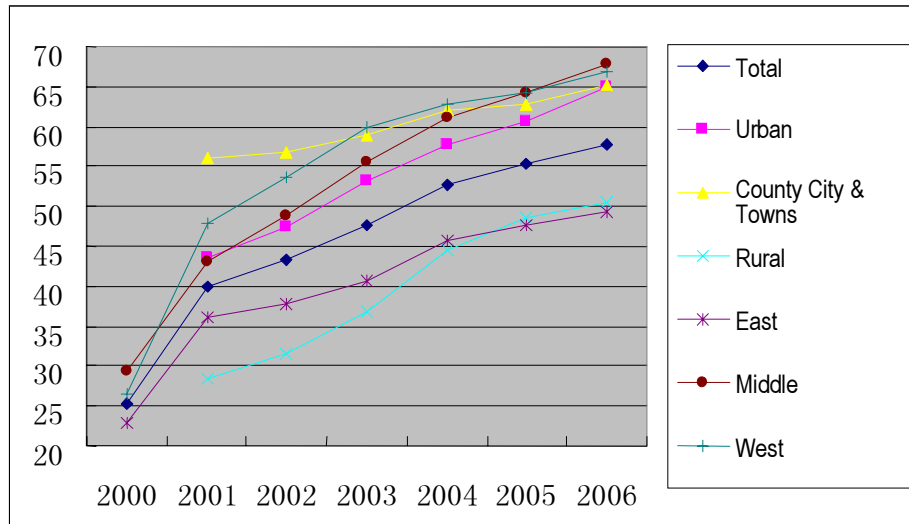


Figure 3-6 Proportion of Private Institutions in All Kindergartens by Region (%)



### 3.5 RAPID DEVELOPMENT OF PRIVATELY FUNDED CHILDREN EDUCATION

In recent years, the privately funded children education has developed very fast in China, and has assumed an ever-higher percentage in the whole children education. The proportion of privately funded kindergartens rose from 25.2% in 2000 to 57.8% in 2006, while their students accounted for 34.3% of all kindergarten students. In the central and western regions, this proportion is much higher than the national average. Particularly, for rural areas, this proportion is higher in the west



and central China than in the east. The rapid development of privately funded children education has largely alleviated the crunch of public resources for children education and popularized children education.

### 3.6 HIGHER LEVELS OF FAMILY EDUCATION

Family education is indispensable to the healthy development of infants, children, and adolescence, and is significant to materializing the goals of Education for All. In recent years, thanks to the intense care and strong support from the governments at all levels and the joint efforts by the educational departments and women associations, the family education cause of China has made continuous progresses. The general plan of China on children development specified the goals for development of family education, and laid down the national plan for the work of family education. Publicity of family education has spread to a large scope, the system and network for guiding this work have been established, and the guidance and service level has gradually advanced. More and more schools have been opened, which has played a constructive role in promoting the level of family education.

### 3.7 SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT OF CHILD HEALTHCARE

In line with the economic and social development as well as increased input by the government, China has achieved a higher level of healthcare for mother and children, planned immunity, and nutrition for children. The infant mortality rate and the mortality rate of children under 5 have become lower each year, respectively dropping from 32.2‰ and 39.7‰ in 2000 to 19.0‰ and 22.5‰ in 2005, realizing in advance the goal specified by The General Plan for Children Development of China (2001-2010) (which aims to reduce the benchmark figures of 2000 by 1/5, namely, to 25.76‰ and 31.76‰ till 2010). In particular, these rates have dropped remarkably in the rural areas. The proportion of underweight newborn babies has also demonstrated a trend of decrease. From 2000 to 2005, the proportion of newborn babies weighing less than 2500 kilograms dropped from 2.4% to 2.2%. In 2006, children suffering from Vitamin A deficiency accounted for 9.1% of the total, 2.1% lower than in 1998. The rate of children receiving planned immunity remained high. The rate for immunity with the four traditional vaccines reached over 98%, and vaccines against B-type hepatitis was included in immunity plans, and 98.96% of the reported carriers had received the vaccine injection. The breastfeeding rate for children aged between 0 and 6 months was 88.7% in 2005.<sup>4</sup>

The rate of use of sanitary toilets and tap water in the Rural rose each year, respectively ascending from 44.84% and 55.22% in 2000 to 55.31% and 61.32% in 2005.

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<sup>4</sup> Source: *The Interim Assessment Report on the General Plan for Children Development in China*

Figure 3-7 Mortality Rate for Children under 5 (‰)

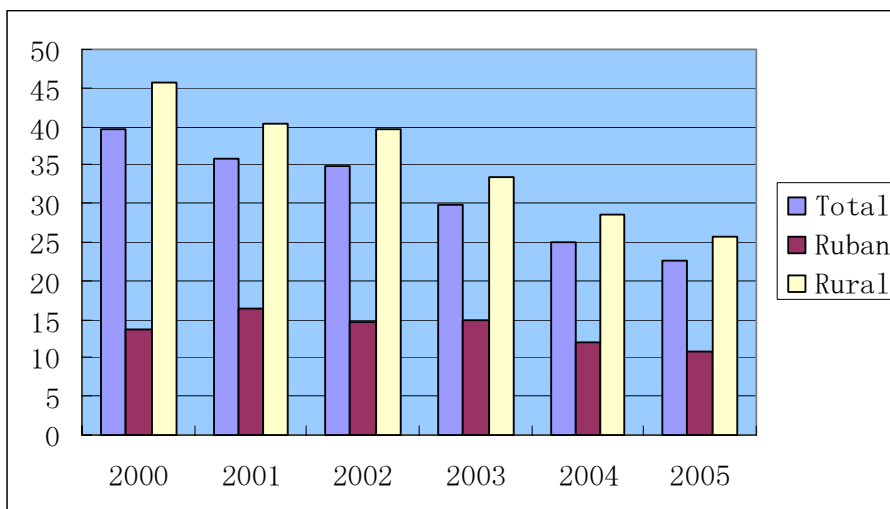
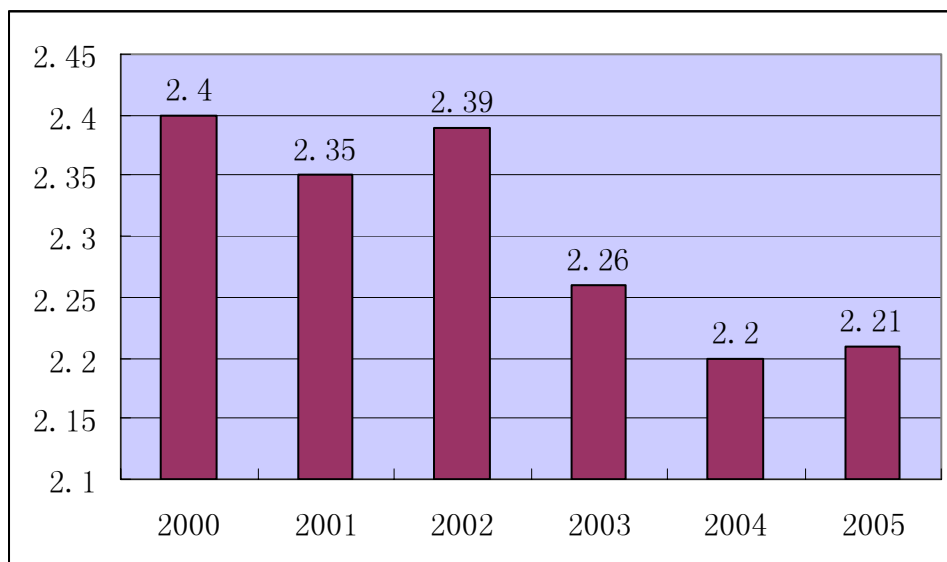


Figure 3-8 Proportion of Underweight Newborn Babies (%)



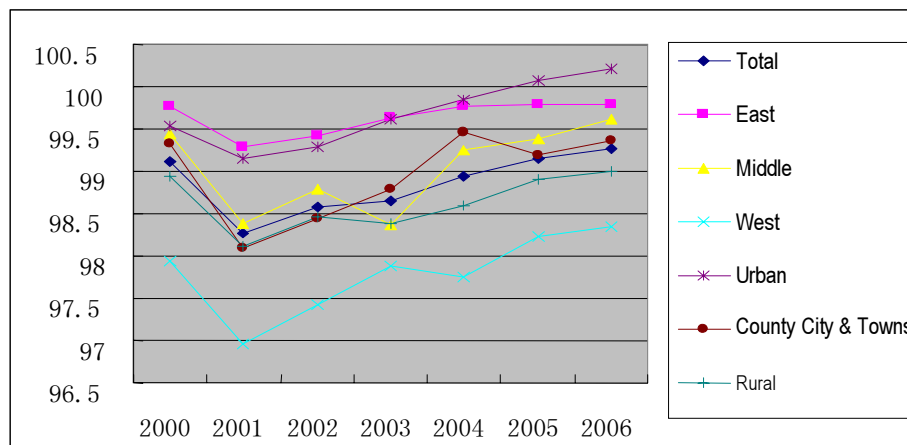
## CHAPTER IV: UNIVERSALIZATION OF BASIC EDUCATION

### 4.1 HIGHER POPULARIZATION OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION AND OBVIOUSLY SMALLER REGIONAL DISPARITY

In 2000, the 9-year compulsory education has been basically popularized and illiteracy has been basically eliminated among young adults in the areas with over 85% of the whole population of the country. China has shifted its working priority of popularizing the 9-year compulsory education to promoting the educational level in the western poverty-stricken areas and the ethnic areas and narrowing the gaps between urban and rural areas and among different regions, and has made noticeable progresses in this direction.

In 2005, the net enrollment rate of primary schools of China rose to 99.15%, and the urban-rural and regional differences were further reduced. The survival rates of primary and senior secondary schools also ascended each year, while the dropout rates declined. The five-year survival rate of primary school students rose from 94.54% to 98.44%, and the dropout rate came down from 0.55% to 0.45%; the three-year survival rate of junior secondary schools rose to 93.83%, and the dropout rate of regular junior secondary schools dropped from 3.21% to 2.60%; the promotion rate of primary school graduates toward junior secondary schools increased from 94.89% to 98.42%, with more drastic growth occurring in the western regions with a weaker economic and educational basis, up from 90.55% to 97.09%. The gross enrollment rate of the junior secondary school stage swelled from 88.6% in 2000 to 95.0% in 2005, rising by 6.4 percentage points.

Figure 4-1 Net Enrollment Rates of Primary Schools by Region between 2000 and 2006 (%)



Till 2006, the number of counties (cities, districts) that had been accepted as having fulfilled the “two-basically” goal increased from 2541 in 2000 to 2973, accounting for 98% of the total population compared to 85% in 2000. The net enrollment rate of primary schools in China reached 99.27%, and that of junior secondary schools 97%.

Figure 4-2 Gross Enrollment Rates of Junior Secondary Schools between 2000 and 2006 (%)

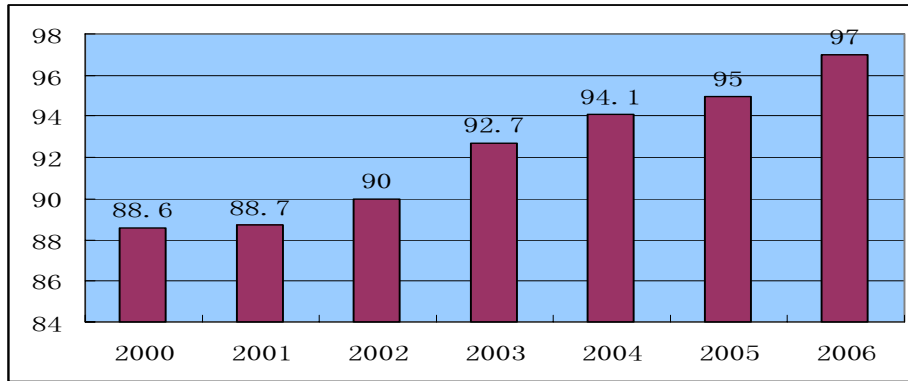
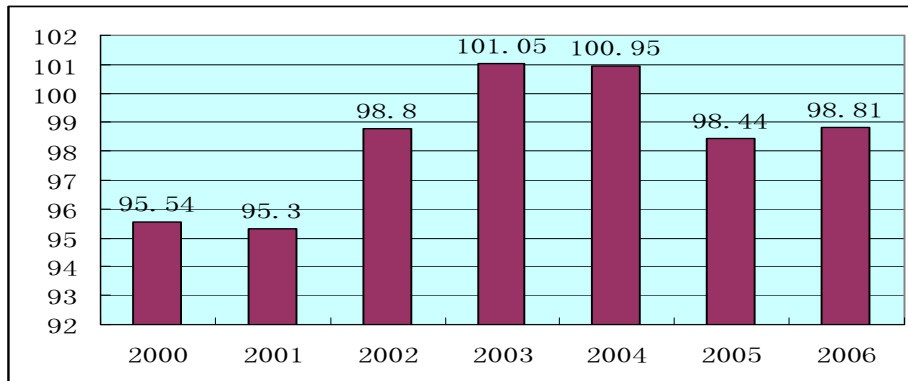
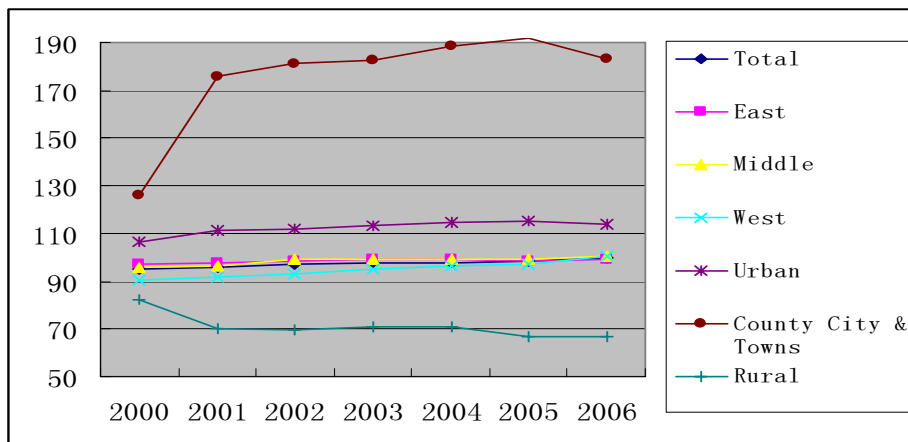


Figure 4-3 Five-Year Survival rates of Primary Schools between 2000 and 2006 (%)



Note: The survival rate exceeded 100% in certain years mainly because some dropouts returned to school.

Figure 4-4 Promotion Rates of Primary School Students toward Junior Secondary Schools (%)



Note: The promotion rates of the cities and towns exceed 100% while the rate of the Rural has declined mainly because enormous numbers of primary school graduates from the Rural have entered the junior secondary schools of cities and towns.

## 4.2 INCREASED FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO COMPULSORY EDUCATION OF POVERTY-STRICKEN AREAS

In order to facilitate balanced development of compulsory education and help the poverty-stricken areas to popularize compulsory education more rapidly, the Chinese Government has launched a series of major projects in the past decade.

### 4.2.1 IMPLEMENTATION OF “THE NATIONAL PROJECT OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION FOR POVERTY-STRICKEN AREAS”

During the “9<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan” period (1996-2000), the country implemented the first phase of “The National Project of Compulsory Education for Poverty-Stricken Areas”, for which the central government invested 3.9 billion Yuan and, as a match, the local governments invested 8.7 billion Yuan, to assist 852 poverty-stricken counties in 22 provincial-level administrative areas in improving the conditions of the primary and secondary schools, especially renovating and expanding their teaching buildings. During the “10<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan” period (2001-2005), the second phase of the “Project” was executed, for which the central government invested 5.0 billion Yuan and the local governments invested a matching sum of 3.83 billion Yuan, bringing the total investment to 8.83 billion Yuan. Of the investment from the central government, over 85% was applied to the poverty-stricken areas in the west. The second phase of the “Project” intensified the training of teachers for the poverty-stricken areas, and added new programs of providing free textbooks and equipment for IT education. The 522 counties aided under the project newly built, renovated or expanded totally 10,698 primary and junior secondary schools, trained headmasters and teachers of primary and junior secondary schools for 650,000 person-times, purchased a 280 million Yuan worth of instruments and equipment, added 2.03 million sets of desks and chairs, and obtained 24.24 million copies of additional books and materials. The implementation of the project greatly boosted the process of popularizing the 9-year compulsory education in the central and western regions.

### 4.2.2 IMPLEMENTATION OF “TWO-BASICALLY” BREAKTHROUGH PLAN FOR WESTERN REGION

Till the end of last century, the counties that had not realized the “two-basically” goal were mainly concentrated in the western provinces of China, and were largely national-level or provincial-level key counties for poverty-relief and supportive development, usually located in mountains, plateaus, and alpine regions, pastoral areas, semi-pastoral areas, and semi-desert areas, with adverse natural conditions and high proportions of ethnic population. To speed up the development of compulsory education in these areas, the Chinese Government in February 2004 began to implement “The ‘Two-Basically’ Breakthrough Plan for the Western Region” (2004-2007), aiming to realize the “two-basically” goal in the west of China by 2007. To realize this plan, the country has taken a series of important measures. One of them was “The Project of Constructing Boarding Schools in the Rural”, for which the central government invested a total of 10 billion Yuan. This project created the conditions to meet the needs of 2.2 million more boarding students for their learning and living. Another project, “The Project of Modern Distance Education for Rural Primary and Secondary Schools”, for which the central government invested 11.1 billion Yuan, is expected to be accomplished at the end of 2007. Under this project, a distance education network covering rural areas all over China will be established to allow the students of rural primary and secondary

schools in the western region to share excellent educational resources. With the efforts of the governments at all levels and the support of all walks of the society, the “two-basically” breakthrough plan has proceeded smoothly. Till the end of 2006, 317 of the 410 counties covered by the plan had passed the acceptance inspection for the “two-basically” target. Up to 96% of the total population in the western region are living in the areas that have fulfilled the “two-basically” goal, 19 percentage points higher compared with 77% in 2002, and the illiteracy rate among young adults had been reduced to less than 5%.

#### **Exhibit 1. The Project of Constructing Boarding Schools in the Rural**

In order to ensure that the “two-basically” goal can be obtained in the western region by 2007, meet the needs of the counties striving to realize the “two-basically” goal to expand the scale of compulsory education, and surmount the “bottleneck” problems that hinder the rural areas of the western region from popularizing compulsory education, the central government and the provincial-level governments have jointly organized the implementation of “The Project of Constructing Boarding Schools in the Rural”. Under this project, during a period of about 4 years starting from 2004, the central government will invest 10 billion Yuan to help to newly build or renovate and expand a number of boarding schools, which would be mainly junior secondary schools, in the western region. Meanwhile, under the precondition of reasonable distribution and scientific planning, the speed would be accelerated in renovating and expanding existing boarding schools with poor conditions and converting non-boarding schools into such where necessary, so as to ensure that the students in need of boarding can study at a boarding school with basic conditions. The scope for implementation of “The Project of Constructing Boarding Schools in the Rural” covers mainly the 372 counties that had not realized the “two-basically” goal at the end of 2002 and the 38 regiment-level farms of Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, including the ethnic autonomous prefectures of some central provinces covered by the National Western Development Program and the counties in the central region that had not realized the “two-basically” goal, as well as, but to a lesser degree, the counties in the western and central regions that, though having realized the “two-basically” goal, still had a weak basis. The schools included in “The Project of Constructing Boarding Schools in the Rural” must be the government-sponsored ones that would be preserved during the structural adjustment of primary and secondary schools and were independent rural (including towns) schools (including vocational junior secondary schools and special education schools).

#### **4.3 ESTABLISHMENT OF MECHANISM TO GUARANTEE FUNDS AND FULLY EXEMPT TUITION AND MISCELLANEOUS FEES FOR RURAL COMPULSORY EDUCATION**

Since 2003, the Chinese Government has attached top priority to rural education and consistently applied most of the added government expenditures for education to rural education in an effort to narrow the educational gaps between the rural and urban areas and among different regions. At the end of 2005, the State Council decided to reform the funding mechanism for rural compulsory education, provide full guarantee to it with public finance, and establish a new guarantee mechanism whereby the central government and local governments shall share the costs of rural compulsory education as per specified items and proportions. This reform has raised the level of guarantee to the public funds for the rural schools of the compulsory education stage, set up an effective long-term mechanism for maintenance of the teaching buildings of these schools, and consolidated the salary guarantee mechanism for their teachers. This reform with profound and far-reaching significance was launched in the rural areas of the western region in the spring term of 2006, and is now in full swing across the country.



Since the promulgation of *Compulsory Education Law of the People's Republic of China* in 1986, the government has been paying the majority of the funds for compulsory education (salaries of the teachers and construction expenses of school buildings), but the students have been required to pay small amounts of miscellaneous charges to complement the public expenses of the schools. With a view to lighten the economic burden of the families of students and promote equality of compulsory education, the Chinese Government initiated in 2006 its policy of exempting the students from miscellaneous charges in the rural compulsory education of the western region, and has brought benefit to 52 million rural students of the western and central regions. In 2007, this policy spread to all rural areas of the country, bringing benefit to 150 million rural students. The urban schools of the compulsory education stage will also gradually stop collecting miscellaneous charges.

#### 4.4 INCREASED SUPPORT TO IMPOVERISHED STUDENTS

In 2001, the state started its pilot program of providing free textbooks to the students of the compulsory education stage in the poverty-stricken areas who came from families with economic difficulties, and has hence provided ever-stronger financial support in this aspect. In 2006, the central government supplied 2.8 billion Yuan and the local governments supplied 2.96 billion Yuan to provide free textbooks to 37.30 million students in the rural areas from families with economic difficulties, of whom the 7.80 million boarding students, who accounted for a half of all the boarding students of the compulsory education stage, received living subsidies. Statistics shows that such policies have substantially reduced the burden of compulsory education expenses on peasant families, by 140 Yuan per year for a primary school student and 180 Yuan per year for a junior secondary school student. Based on the statistics, since the introduction of the new mechanism to guarantee the funds for rural compulsory education, about 200,000 dropout children have returned to school in the western region. The Chinese Government has decided to provide free textbooks of national courses to all the rural students of the compulsory education stage from the autumn of 2007.

#### 4.5 ACTIVE PROMOTION OF BALANCED DEVELOPMENT OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION WITHIN A REGION

Since 2005, the Ministry of Education has formulated some policies and measures to promote balanced development of compulsory education. Local governments have intensified their efforts to renovate the weaker schools, both rural and urban, in an effort to narrow the inter-school disparities. Some places have gradually unified the urban and rural funding for each student of the compulsory education stage, and boosted the balance of school conditions. Others have established the mechanisms for the exchange and relay of teachers among different schools, and basically realized even distribution of teaching resources. Still others have heightened their efforts to reform the weaker schools to narrow the differences among schools.

#### 4.6 INCREASED SUPPORT TO EDUCATION OF MIGRANT AND DISABLED CHILDREN

As enormous numbers of peasants come to work in cities as migrant workers, the education of their children has aroused the great concern of the society. Faced with this new situation in recent years,

the state has articulated the guiding principle of “The government of the destination city of migration and the local full-time public primary and junior secondary schools shall take the main responsibility for the education of the children of migrant workers”. Local governments have taken active measures, and have guaranteed and improved the education of such children.

Meanwhile, the governments at all levels have paid great attention to the education and guarding of the left-behind children who have not followed their parents to the cities but continue to attend rural schools, and taken it as an important content of the work of consolidating local compulsory education. As required by the Ministry of Education, files shall be kept of the left-behind children and a mechanism of dynamic management and monitoring shall be set up to guarantee the education and protection of left-behind children.

Between 2001 and 2005, China Disabled Persons’ Federation and the Ministry of Education successively carried out “The Project of School Enrollment of Blind Children in the Central and Western Regions”, “The Project of Assisting the Disabled and Supporting Their Education”, and “The Project of Supporting Education with Welfare Funds from Lottery Sale”, which have cost an accumulative total of nearly 120 million Yuan and have provided support to disabled students for more than 50,000 person-times. Meanwhile, the local governments have generally increased their input for special education, and all sectors of the society have launched a variety of activities to assist the disabled and support their education.

#### 4.7 ESTABLISHMENT OF MECHANISM FOR SUPERVISION, INSPECTION, ASSESSMENT AND ACCEPTANCE OF “TWO-BASICALLY” WORK

In order to realize the goal of “basically popularizing the 9-year compulsory education and basically eliminating illiteracy among young adults”, and in compliance with the detailed rules issued by the State Council on implementation of *Compulsory Education Law*, China established in 1994 the “two-basically” assessment and acceptance mechanism, whereby all the counties (cities, districts) that have realized the “two-basically” goal shall be assessed for acceptance, and the provincial-level entities of which all the counties (cities, districts) have realized the “two-basically” goal shall be subject to comprehensive supervision and inspection (“national ‘two-basically’ inspection” for short).

The counties (cities, districts) that have realized the “two-basically” goal shall be assessed for acceptance in terms of the degree of popularization, quality of teachers, school conditions, educational funds, educational quality, and literacy promotion. The assessment and acceptance procedure is as follows: The government of a county-level entity conducts self-inspection and, if it believes that the entity has satisfied the acceptance standards for the “two-basically” inspection, files an application; the provincial-level government shall organize the assessment and acceptance, and report the results to the department of the central government in charge of education administration, which, in turn, shall review and publish the results. The national “two-basically” inspection verifies that a provincial-level entity has fully realized the “two-basically” goal. A provincial-level entity with all its counties (cities, districts) having realized the “two-basically” goal shall be subject to comprehensive supervision and inspection. Prior to the national inspection, however, this entity shall conduct full and thorough internal inspection to find out and rectify the



existing problems, and submit a “two-basically” application report to the central government in the name of the provincial-level government. The national supervision team will not carry out the supervision and inspection before it has executed rigorous review of the performance, self-examination, and problem rectification by the provincial-level government concerning the “two-basically” indicators. Till the end of 2007, the provinces (autonomous regions/municipalities directly under the central government) that have qualified in the national “two-basically” inspection had increased to 24 (including Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps) from 11 in 2000.

The “two-basically” supervision, inspection, assessment, and acceptance have generated a remarkable effect. They have further strengthened the sense of responsibility of the governments at all levels toward compulsory education, and have induced greater investment in this undertaking. They have facilitated the solution of the thorny and key problems of compulsory education, and created a good atmosphere wherein the whole society values and supports education. In all, they have forcefully ensured the accomplishment of the historic “two-basically” tasks.

## CHAPTER V: MEETING THE LEARNING NEEDS OF YOUTH AND ADULTS FOR LIFE SKILLS

Over the past 20 odd years, along with the development and changes of Chinese economy and society, various new forms of education were born, including vocational and technical education, pre-job training of laborers, on-the-job training of employees, job-transfer training, and reemployment training, and the society has had ever-greater needs for vocational and technical education and training. Hundreds of millions of peasants are flowing to the cities, which presents a demand for vocational and technical education and training. In order to meet the needs of the youth and adults to learn the increasing and diversifying skills, the Chinese Government has laid down a developmental goal of vigorously developing vocational and technical education and training for all, raising the quality of the whole nation, developing a learning society where all people are learning and will be learning for their whole life, and building a strong country in terms of human resources. To enhance the coordination among governmental departments for their policies on vocational and technical education and training, China has established an interdepartmental agency named the Committee for Coordination of Vocational and Technical Education.

### 5.1 EXPANSION OF SCALE OF SECONDARY VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

In the past years, the Chinese Government has adjusted the structure of secondary education and adopted a policy of expanding the scale of secondary vocational and technical education. In 2005, the Ministry of Education issued *The Opinion on Speeding Up the Development of Secondary Vocational and Technical Education*, requiring secondary vocational and technical education to reach an equal scale with the regular senior secondary school education and realize fast, healthy and sustainable development. For two years successively in 2005 and 2006, the secondary vocational schools have expanded their enrollment by 1 million each year, and they newly enrolled 7.48 million students in 2006, bringing the scale of registered students to a historic high of 18.10 million. The rapid development of secondary vocational education has satisfied the needs of more youth and teenagers to learn professional skills.

### 5.2 IMPLEMENTATION OF VARIOUS PROJECTS OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In order to enhance the vocational and technical training of youth and adult laborers, the Chinese Government has implemented in recent years a series of training projects, including “The National Project of Cultivation and Training of Skilled Talents”, “The Project of Transfer Training of Rural Labor Force”, “The Project of Training Practical Talents for the Rural”, “The Project of Scientific and Technological Training for New Types of Peasants”, and “The Project of Adult Continuing Education and Re-employment Training Concentrating on Promotion of Vocational Skills”. The governments at all levels, numerous vocational colleges and schools, and various enterprises have participated in the effort to provide training services. In recent years, hundreds of millions of urban and rural laborers have benefited from such training plans each year. For example, in each year, about 35 million person-times of training for the transfer of rural labor force and about 45 million person-times of training of practical talents for the Rural have been executed.

### Exhibit 2. The “Sunshine Project” of Transfer Training of Rural Labor Force

To strengthen the training for the transfer of rural labor force, the Chinese Government has formulated The National Plan for Training of Migrant Workers between 2003 and 2010. On the basis of this plan, since 2004, the ministries of agriculture, finance, labor and social security, education, science and technology, and construction have jointly organized the implementation of “The Sunshine Project of Transfer Training of Rural Labor Force” (the “Sunshine Project” for short).

The Sunshine Project, funded with public finance, implements model programs of vocational and technical training of rural laborers before their transfer to non-agricultural sectors for employment, mainly in the grain production bases, major origins of migrant workers, poverty-stricken areas, and former bases of communist revolution. The project has been organized and implemented under the principle of “The government promotes, the schools sponsor, the related departments supervise, and the peasants benefit from the training programs”, in an endeavor to raise the quality and working skills of the rural laborers, facilitate their transfer to non-agricultural industries and cities, stabilize their employment, and increase their income.

The targets of the project are as follows: During the period from 2004 to 2005, the focus of the assistance will be placed on holding short-term vocational and technical training in the major areas of grain production, major origins of migrant workers, poverty-stricken areas, and former bases of communist revolution, exploring the training mechanism, and laying the foundation for massive training, with an aim to train totally 5 million rural laborers, or 2.5 million a year; between 2006 and 2010, large-scale vocational and technical training will be launched across the country, the training mechanism for the transfer of rural labor force will be set up and completed, the development of rural human resources will be intensified, and 30 million rural laborers will be trained, or 6 million a year; after 2010, following the requirements of the coordinate economic and social development of both the urban and the rural, the training of rural labor force will be incorporated into the national education system, and the scale and level of the training will be expanded and lifted, so as to ensure that the scientific and cultural qualities of rural laborers can generally match the level of the modernization development of the country.

The “Sunshine Project” focuses on the programs of vocational and technical training, and provides help to the guided training, which usually lasts for 20 to 180 days. The contents and curricula of the training should be arranged according to the national vocational standards and the needs of jobs. The government and individual peasants shall share the training expenses under the “Sunshine Project”. The government subsidy consists of the supportive input from the central government and that from the local governments. Between 2004 and 2007, the project received an accumulative total of 2.15 billion Yuan from the central finance, training 12.30 million rural laborers, of whom 10.63 million, or 86.4%, were transferred to, and employed by, non-agricultural sectors. Following the example set by the central government, the local governments invested over 3 billion Yuan, and trained more than 20 million peasants. The implementation of the “Sunshine Project” forcefully increased the income and raised the living standards of rural residents. Based on the sampling survey in 2007, the average income of the trainees of the “Sunshine Project” who were transferred to non-agricultural employment reached 983.5 Yuan a month, 131.3 Yuan more compared with last year, and 277.5 Yuan higher than that of migrant workers who did not receive the training.

### 5.3 ENHANCED TRAINING OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS FOR PRACTICAL AND LIFE SKILLS

In recent years, in the course of curriculum reform for basic education, the educational organizations of all types and levels have been advised to enhance training of the students for practical and life skills and place emphasis on unification of class teaching and production practice, taking into consideration the characteristics of the physical and psychological development of the children and teenagers. For instance, kindergartens are required to train the children on practical

abilities and basic life skills through game activities; the curricula of compulsory education are thus designed to include comprehensive practical learning activities, and the primary and secondary schools are advised to encourage their students to participate in all sorts of extracurricular activities, through which they can develop their practical abilities as well as a sense of responsibility toward the society. In view of their actualities, schools of all levels and types should encourage their students to participate in productive labor and practical activities, develop a practical spirit and industrious character, and master basic life and labor skills through exposure to nature and the society. Many areas have established the system for youth and teenagers to take part in community service and construction.

### **Exhibit 3. The Project of Scientific and Technological Training for New Types of Peasants**

Since 2006, the ministries of agriculture and finance have organized the implementation of “The Project of Scientific and Technological Training for New Types of Peasants”.

Guided by the general design, namely, “Concentrate on the leading industries, train professional peasants, give classes and guidance at villages, and develop a flagship product for each village”, and with the village as the basic unit, the project provides training at the villages. The training covers the critical technologies involved before, during and after the production process, the knowledge of business management, the basics of law, and the knowledge about rural ecological and environment, in an attempt to raise the agricultural skills of the peasants, boost agricultural production development, and increase income of peasants.

Between 2006 and 2007, the training under the project was launched in 20000 villages of 600 counties. The central government made a special-purpose investment of 300 million Yuan, and the local governments matched it with 150 million Yuan. Totally the project held 337,000 training sessions, provided on-site instruction for 6.045 million times, and trained 1.53 million full-time peasants. Inspired by this project, the local governments also trained 5 million people.

“The Project of Scientific and Technological Training for New Types of Peasants” has assumed some characteristics as follows: In terms of training contents, the curricula are set around the leading industries of a village, with the focus usually on high-efficiency cultivation, scale breeding, facility agriculture, and featured agriculture. The training concerns little theory but much practice, and emphasizes applicability. In terms of training methods, the project comprehensively utilizes the methods of centralized classes, on-site instruction, and scientific and technological services, aiming at tangible effects. On the basis of the “face-to-face” classroom teaching, the project also makes full use of other means such as newspapers, radio and television to carry out the training and expand its coverage. As for the management mechanism of the project, “The central government shall make payment directly to the villages, the training must be ensured for each individual, the institutions shall be hired through bidding, and the funds shall be managed through the reimbursement system”.

#### **5.4 INCREASED INPUT FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, AND ENHANCED ABILITY BUILDING OF VOCATIONAL COLLEGES**

To promote the development of vocational education, China has in recent years enhanced the basic ability building of vocational education, and has launched a number of programs in this concern, such as “The Program of Constructing Practice Bases for Vocational Education”, “The Program of Constructing County-Level Centers of Vocational Education”, “The Program of Constructing Exemplary Secondary Vocational Schools”, “The Program of Advancing the Qualities of Teachers of Secondary Vocational Schools”, and “The Program of Constructing National-Level Exemplary

Institutions of Higher Vocational Education”. During the “11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan” period (2006-2010), the central government will invest over 10 billion Yuan for the basic ability building of vocational education, and solidly improve the teaching conditions and teaching quality of vocational colleges and elevate their levels of management.

#### 5.5 ESTABLISHMENT OF GRANT SYSTEM FOR STUDENTS OF SECONDARY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

In order to encourage more adolescents to study in secondary vocational schools and lighten their economic burdens, the central government in 2006 arranged 800 million Yuan for the special purpose of providing aid to those from financially strained families. In 2007, the state instituted a new national grant system for secondary vocational schools. This system is universally beneficial, and its beneficiaries include all the students of the first and second grades in secondary vocational schools who are from the Rural and towns or from urban families with economic difficulties. Each student received a grant of 1500 Yuan a year. Totally, the supported students were 16 million, accounting for 90% of all the registered students of secondary vocational schools. In 2007, the central and local governments together invested more than 10 billion Yuan as the national grant funds to the secondary vocational schools.

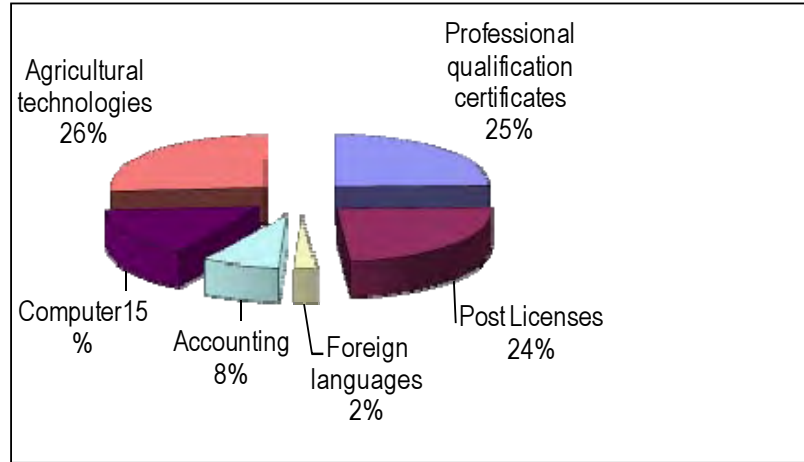
#### 5.6 FORMATION OF LIFELONG LEARNING SYSTEM AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING NETWORK

To meet the increasing and diversifying needs of the adults for skill training, China has basically formed a vocational training network comprising schools of all levels and types, vocational training institutions, internal education of enterprises, and distance education, which is distributed throughout both urban and rural areas. The scale of vocational training has continuously expanded.

##### 5.6.1 NON-DIPLOMA EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF VARIOUS SCHOOLS

The HEIs and secondary vocational schools, aside from providing formal educational opportunities, also engage in vocational training for both urban and rural laborers. In 2006, the number of the graduates of further study and training organized by HEIs nationwide reached 3.4231 million, of whom 28.7% went through training for professional qualification certificates, and 71.3% for training for post licenses. Of these trainees, 61.6% received training for a duration from one week to one month. The number of graduates of training organized by secondary vocational schools reached 7.7481 million, of whom 60% received training for a duration from one week to one month. The contents of training include agricultural technologies, courses for professional qualification certificates, courses for post qualification licenses, computer knowledge, accounting, and foreign languages.

Figure 5-1 Structure of Training Graduates from Secondary Vocational Schools by Training Contents



#### 5.6.2 TYPES OF TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

In 2006, China had 3,177 technical training schools for employees, which produced 2.2519 million graduates, 3,212 centers for employment training, and 21,462 private training institutions. Totally 19.05 million person-times' training was carried out in the whole year, 17.2% more than last year. In this year, 6.45 million unemployed and laid-off personnel participated in re-employment training, and 630,000 people engaged in training on business undertaking. Besides, the enterprises carried out extensive training for their employees in various forms, and the scale of such training reached 91 million person-times.

In the Chinese countryside, cultural and technical training schools for peasants have been established widely, and a network for this purpose has been established. This network consists of the county-level vocational schools or adult schools as the leading force, the township-level cultural and technical schools for adults as the backbone, and the village-level ones as the basis. In 2006, there were 150,955 cultural and technical training schools for peasants in China graduating 45.2058 million trainees. Between 1978 and 2006, the three levels of peasant training institutions annually trained 80 million people, thus greatly elevating the skills of peasants for production, living, business, and management and strongly promoted the economic and social development of the Rural.

In recent years, to meet the needs of migrant workers to learn the basic life skills, some cities with a large number of such workers have been running night schools to train them on vocational techniques, urban life, traffic safety, professional ethics, and labor laws and regulations, which is widely acclaimed by migrant workers.

#### 5.7 MULTIPLE CHANNELS OF FUNDRAISING FOR VOCATIONAL TRAINING

In order to meet the increasing needs for vocational skill training, China has adopted a policy of raising training funds through multiple channels, and has continuously improved the cost-sharing mechanism. For example, the funds for training of rural laborers for their transfer to other sectors come from the following channels: Firstly, various funds paid by the governments at all levels for the

project of training for transfer of rural labor force; secondly, the poverty-relief funds utilized for training and transfer of the impoverished laborers; thirdly, governmental subsidy for the transfer training of rural laborers, such as the allowance paid by some local governments to the training institutions for each of their trainees who is qualified in vocational skill assessment; fourthly, the tuition paid by the trainees.

#### **Exhibit 4. Chaoyang District of Beijing Launched Night Schools at Construction Sites to Train Migrant Workers**

On the morning of April 19th, 2005, Chaoyang District launched a project of training migrant workers at night schools simultaneously at 300 large-scale construction sites, aiming to accomplish training of 90,000 migrant workers in the year on traffic safety, professional ethics, labor laws and regulations, fire prevention, and vocational techniques, so as to comprehensively improve the qualities of the peasants working in the city as well as other types of migrant population. In 2007, Chaoyang District, by opening night schools, will complete training of the migrant workers at the 700 plus construction sites located within the district.

Chaoyang District is the major venue for the engineering and construction for the upcoming Olympic Games. Currently, the district accommodates over 700 construction sites, where over 300,000 people from outside the capital are working. Considering that the migrant workers have scarce knowledge of law and do not know how to defend their legal rights with the legal weapon, Chaoyang District launched a project of training them at night schools on the construction sites. Each migrant worker will be provided with a textbook, a set of teaching discs, and a database of teaching resources, and can thus obtain stronger abilities to obtain perceptual knowledge and conduct self-study and in-depth study. For the training on construction sites, totally 5,300 copies of the migrant education textbook were distributed, together with 300 sets of teaching discs on safe production, laws and regulations, traffic safety, fire prevention, the regulation on administration of migrant population, professional ethics, and vocational techniques. In the meantime, basic training is provided in three main lines, namely, safeguarding of rights, safety, and civilization. The basics on safeguarding their rights mainly involve the laws, regulations and policies on labor contracts, salaries, social security, and labor disputes that the migrant workers can use to safeguard their legal rights and interests; the basics on safety mainly involve the laws, regulations, operational specifications, and real cases about safe production, in pertinence to the characteristics of construction sites; and the basic norms for citizens mainly involve the laws, regulations and the common norms to be observed in urban life.

This reporter has learned that the training of the night schools at construction sites will take diverse forms, including face-to-face lecturing by teachers, multimedia classes, and centralized learning. Chaoyang District will complete training of 90,000 migrant workers at 300 construction sites in this year. In 2007, the district will fully accomplish training of approximately 300,000 workers on all of the 700 plus construction sites through holding night schools.

(Source: [www.smeas.gov.cn](http://www.smeas.gov.cn), (The Anshan portal of the China Small and Medium Enterprise website) April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2005)

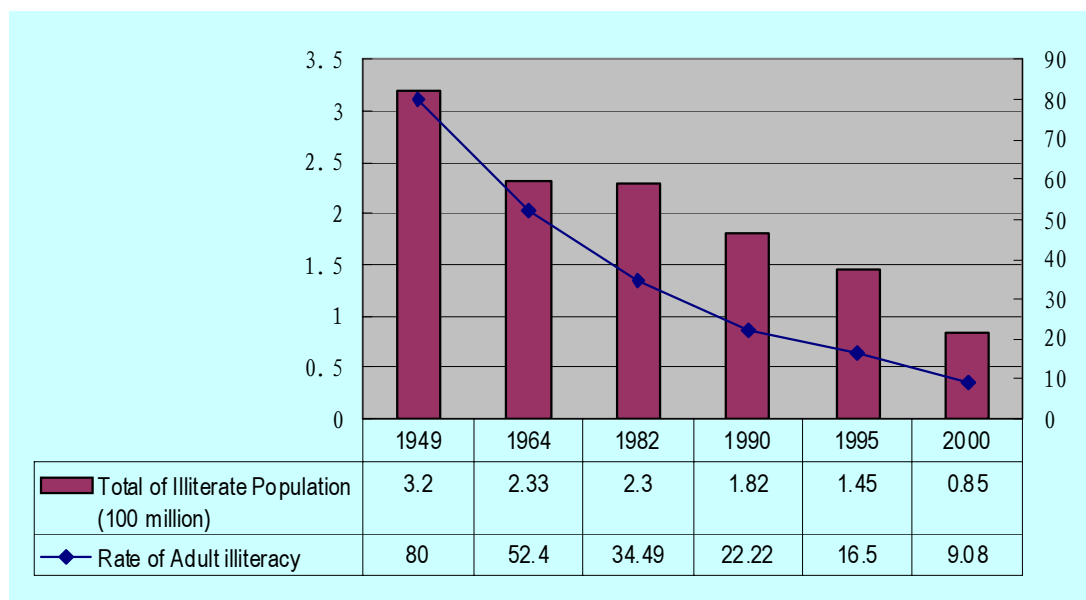
## CHAPTER VI: ADULT LITERACY

To eliminate illiteracy and satisfy the basic learning needs of adults is an important aspect of guaranteeing the basic rights for learning of all the members of the society; to eliminate illiteracy and enable the illiterate adults to obtain the basic reading, writing and calculating abilities is an important means to remove the knowledge disparity, promote educational fairness, and get rid of poverty. China is a developing country with the largest population in the world, and is also one of the countries with a large illiterate population. Since the initiation of the Education for All program, China has consistently treated adult literacy as a strategic priority for the EFA work. In 2000, China has obtained the strategic goal of “basically eliminating illiteracy among young adults and reducing the illiteracy rate of young adults to less than 5%”, as specified in *The National Program of Action for Educational Reform and Development in China* issued in 1993.

### 6.1 DRASTIC DECLINE OF RATE OF ADULT ILLITERACY

From 1990 to 2000, China annually eliminated an average of 4 million illiterates, and freed accumulatively 46.5168 million people from illiteracy. Based on the 5<sup>th</sup> national population census of 2000, the proportion of the illiterate population aged 15 or above dropped from 15.9% of the total population in 1990 to 6.7% in 2000; the rate of adult illiteracy dropped from 22.2% in 1990 to 9.1% in 2000; the population of illiterate young adults dropped from 61.71 million in 1990 to 22 million in 2000, with illiteracy rate of young adults coming down from 10.4% to 4.8%. As scheduled, China realized the strategic goal, which was set up in 1993, of “basically eliminating illiteracy among young adults” till 2000.

Figure 6-1 Declining Trend of Illiterate Population Aged 15 or Above and Illiteracy Rate, 1949-2000

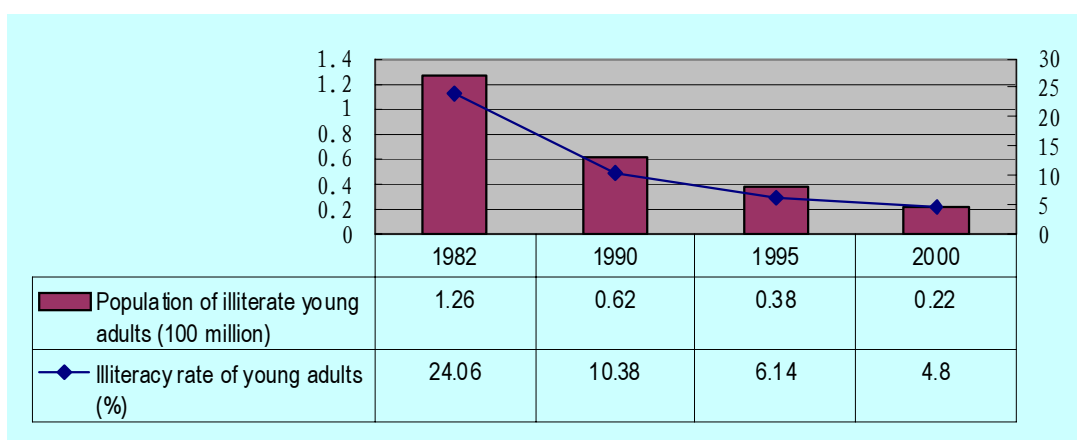




Source: 1. The bulletins of major statistics of the 1953, 1964, 1982, 1990 and 2000 national population censuses published by the National Bureau of Statistics of China;  
 2. The 1995 sampling survey of 1% of national population conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics of China

From 2000 to 2006, the country eliminated totally 13.88 million illiterates, and the illiteracy rate of young adults decreased to 3.58%. In 2006, the number of county-level administrative entities (county, city, or district) that were accepted as having basically popularized the 9-year compulsory education and having basically eliminated illiteracy among young adults reached 2,973, accounting for 96% of the national total.

Figure 6-2 Declining Trend of Illiterate Population and Illiteracy Rate of Young Adults in China



Source: 1. The bulletins of major statistics of the 1953, 1964, 1982, 1990 and 2000 national population censuses published by the National Bureau of Statistics of China;  
 2. The 1995 sampling survey of 1% of national population conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics of China

## 6.2 REMARKABLE LITERACY ACHIEVEMENTS IN ETHNIC AREAS

Due to the influence of economic, cultural, geographic, historic, and other factors, the inhabitation of Chinese ethnic minorities are usually located at the plateaus and barren areas. For a long time, these areas have been comparatively backward in culture and education, and have had more serious illiteracy with higher illiteracy rates than the national average. Based on the fifth national population census in 2000, the adult illiteracy rates of some provinces (autonomous regions) such as Guangxi, Xinjiang and Sichuan, which have a high percentage of ethnic minority population, were already lower than or similar to the national average rate of 9.08%; from 1982 to 2000, the adult illiteracy rates of Ningxia, Gansu, Yunnan, Guizhou and Tibet dropped by wider margins than the national average.

Figure 6-3 Changes of Adult Illiteracy Rates of Ethnic Areas in China

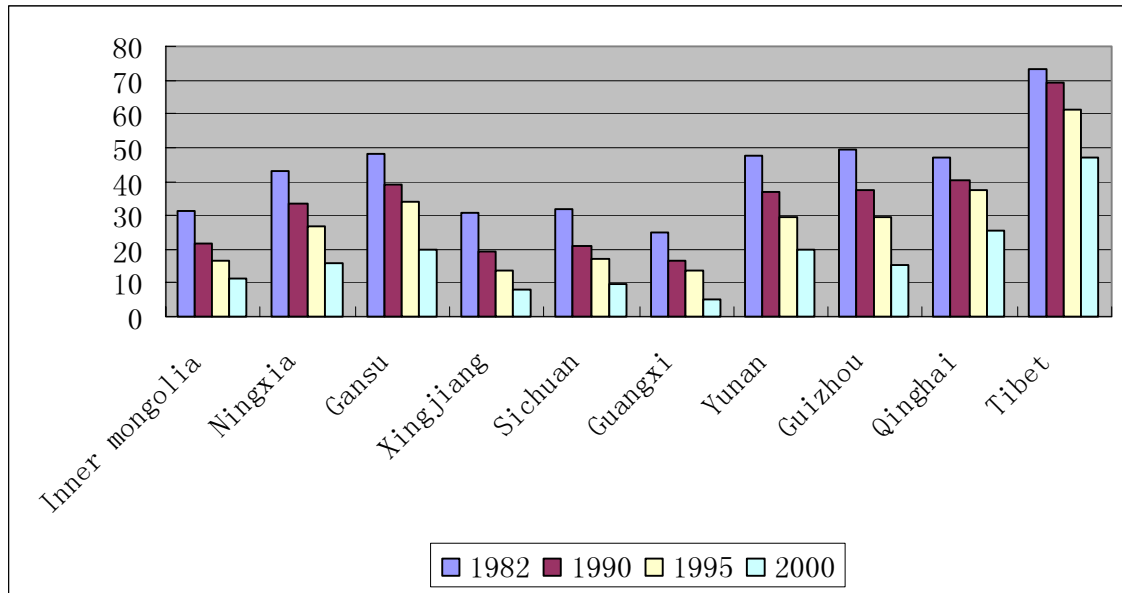
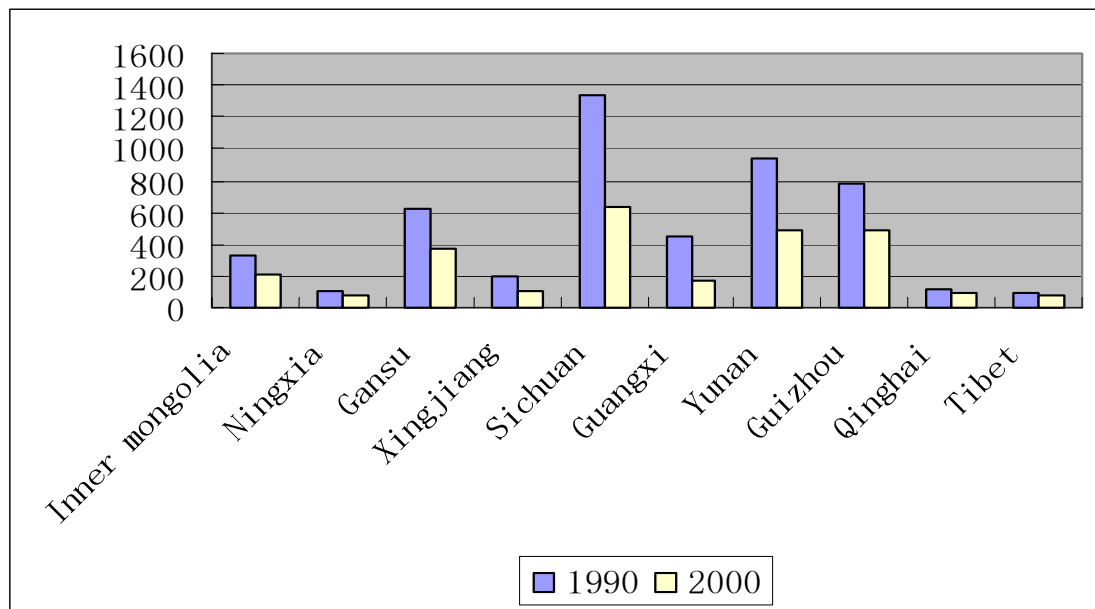


Figure 6-4 Comparison between Illiterate Populations of Ethnic Areas of 1990 and 2000 (Unit: 10,000 persons)



### 6.3 INCORPORATION OF LITERACY INTO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS

The Chinese Government attaches great significance to the literacy work, regarding it as an important content of the guarantee to the basic citizen right to receive education, and has always held it as a basic national policy. The important laws, including *The Constitution* and *Education Law*, all contain provisions on literacy education. In 1993, the Chinese Government amended and

promulgated again *The Regulation on Literacy Work*. Since the 1990's, the Chinese Government has followed the guiding principle of "Prevention, Elimination, Promotion" for the literacy work, related this work to the production and life of peasants, and vigorously advanced the development of literacy education.

To enhance the policy guidance and macro planning for the literacy work, the Chinese Government has regarded it as an important content of national development and incorporated it in every national five-year plan, and has formulated goals and principles for literacy education of every historic period. In 2002, the Chinese Government approved and forwarded *The Opinion on Literacy Work during the "10<sup>th</sup> Five" Period* formulated by the Ministry of Education together with other 11 departments; in 2007, the 12 departments including the Ministry of Education jointly issued *The Guiding Opinion on Further Strengthening Literacy Work*, which defined the goals and tasks of literacy work in the new era and put forward the measures for further reform of literacy education. To enforce and implement *The Regulation on Literacy Work*, the Ministry of Education has formulated and issued a series of policies and documents, and convenes annual national meetings on literacy education to review the development of literacy education, summarize the experiences, research the problems, propose the countermeasures, and make assignments for the work.

Following the guidance of related laws and policies of the country, local governments at all levels have enacted corresponding local regulations, policies and plans, included the literacy work into the general plans of local economic and social development, and taken literacy education as a duty and goal of the government. In the meanwhile, they have utilized radio, television, conferences, newspapers and magazines, billboards, slogans to publicize the work and motivate support to it, and have ensured the participation by grassroot communities, villages, schools, and illiterate individuals into the literacy work.

#### 6.4 STRENGTHEN MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND WORKING MECHANISM FOR LITERACY EDUCATION

With a view to motivate all social forces to push the literacy work to greater widths and depths, with the approval from the State Council, the leaders of former State Education Commission, the Department of Publicity of CPC Central Committee, the Ministry of Culture, State Administration of Radio, Film and Television, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Forestry, State Ethnic Affairs Commission, PLA General Political Department, Central Committee of Chinese Communist Youth League, the All China Women Federation, and China Association for Science and Technology jointly formed the interdepartmental coordination group for national literacy work. This group has convened regular meetings to research and make deployments for this work, enhanced its macro guidance and inspection, motivated social care and support to it, and created a good atmosphere for it. The provincial-level, prefecture-level, and county-level governments have established corresponding organizations, and formed the management system and operation mechanism for literacy work, which are expressed as "The government provides unified leadership and the related departments take their respective responsibilities to make concerted efforts and exercise joint management".

In China, the governmental organs for administration of education are responsible for organizing the implementation of literacy education under the leadership of the central government and the local

governments at all levels. The related departments and organizations take their respective responsibilities while cooperate with each other to make concerted efforts and exercise joint management. The Ministry of Education has a division for literacy education affiliated with the Department of Basic Education. The departments of local governments have similar offices with specialized staff responsible for organizing the implementation of the literacy work.

#### Exhibit 5. Chinese Laws, Regulations and Policies on Literacy Education

“The state shall develop various educational facilities, and eliminate illiteracy.” ---*The Constitution of the People’s Republic of China*, as amended in March 2004

“The People's government at different levels, self-managed mass organizations at grassroots level and organizations in enterprises and institutions shall take every measure to develop literacy education. Citizens who according to the state statutes have the capacity to receive literacy education shall receive such education.” --- *Education Law of the People’s Republic of China*, March 1995

“Basically eliminate illiteracy among young adults till 2000, and reduce the illiteracy rate of young adults to less than 5%” ---*The National Program of Action for Educational Reform and Development in China*, February 1993

“All illiterate and semiliterate citizens aged 15 or above, except those who have lost their learning ability, shall have the right and the obligation to receive literacy education, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, or race.” ---*The Regulation on Literacy Work*, August 1993

#### 6.5 MOTIVATION OF SOCIAL FORCES AND NGO’S FOR ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN LITERACY WORK

Illiteracy elimination is a learning campaign requiring extensive mass participation. The Chinese Government has brought into play the roles of the non-governmental organizations and motivated full social participation, and has thus created a good environment for the literacy work in which all social forces care about, support, and engage in this endeavor and jointly seek further progresses of the work.

The Chinese Communist Youth League and its branches at all levels have organized among Chinese youth the volunteer activities for illiteracy elimination. In each summer break, millions of college and secondary school students go to the Rural to undertake literacy education and training on practical technologies. By means of teaching assistance eliminating illiteracy, scientific and technological development, training of teachers, and technological cooperation, they have effectively elevated the scientific and cultural qualities of the peasants and helped the villagers with their efforts to get rid of poverty. China Association for Science and Technology has carried out activities for popularizing and disseminating practical technologies in the Rural, in which the illiterate villagers have learned both literacy and technologies quite effectively.



**Exhibit 6. “The Volunteer Activity for Illiteracy Elimination and Scientific and Cultural Services by College and Secondary School Students of China”**

To boost the development of volunteer service activities and facilitate the growth of young students and the development of the educational cause, since 1996, the Department of Publicity of CPC Central Committee, the Central Committee of China Communist Youth League (CCYL) and the Ministry of Education, together with other related departments, have implemented the relay programs of teaching assistance and poverty relief by young volunteers, which called on the young volunteers to work for 1 to 2 years on the basic education in the key impoverished areas. In each summer break, the Ministry of Education cooperates with the Department of Publicity of CPC Central Committee and the CCYL Central Committee to organize and motivate nearly a million volunteers from among the students of colleges and specialized secondary schools to provide the Rural with cultural, scientific, and health services and use their knowledge to perform literacy education of rich contents and diverse forms as well as cultural, scientific and health services.

**6.6 CARRYING OUT LITERACY EDUCATION IN DIVERSE WAYS**

Literacy teaching is carried out in connection with the production actuality. On the basis of the actual situation, and giving consideration to the needs of local production and living as well as the learning characteristics of the masses, local authorities have adopted flexible and varied teaching methods and ways, and arranged the learning largely to be done in spare time and to the pace of agricultural seasons. The urgently needed knowledge is learned first. In this way, the enthusiasm of the trainees has been aroused. The teaching takes three forms: class teaching, group teaching, and individual guidance.

Distance education is performed for literacy teaching. Along with the development of science and technology, modern educational technologies have been extensively applied to rural education. Now that broadcasting and television have been popularized, more and more areas have employed the means of distance education such as radio and television courses for literacy education, which has intensified the interest of the learners and lifted the teaching quality. Some areas utilize multimedia technologies to spread cultural and technological information, through organizing villagers to watch video records or playing video records at the production sites to conduct demonstrative teaching. At the same time, utilizing the distance education resources of local primary and secondary schools, the teachers organize the peasants to learn practical technologies from the discs and combine face-to-face lecturing with distance education, effectively enlarging the scale of literacy education.

Literacy education is closely combined with rural cultural activities. Rural reading rooms and libraries have been created and improved. The educational and cultural departments, in cooperation with the women associations and CCYL organizations in the Rural, have carried out colorful cultural and sports activities. College and secondary school students have been organized to go to countryside to provide scientific and cultural services and spread scientific and cultural information.

**6.7 CLOSE COMBINATION OF LITERACY EDUCATION WITH TRAINING OF ADULTS FOR PRODUCTION AND LIFE SKILLS**

The Chinese Government has closely linked literacy education with the production activities and life of the trainees and actively pushed forward “The Program of Transfer Training for Rural Labor Force” and “The Program of Training on Rural Practical Technologies”. It has thus enhanced the ability of rural laborers to undertake business, find jobs, and get rich, and elevated both the moral and living standards of citizens. The educational, agricultural, and science and technology departments of various areas have been intimately cooperating and, according to the actual situation and on the basis of literacy learning, have arranged various training activities for learning of production and life skills. For example, local educational departments would usually organize training on rural practical technologies, training of the redundant rural labor force for its transfer, and education on rural society, culture, and life, including education of citizen awareness, legal education, environmental education, population education, hygiene and health education, and education on household management. The agricultural and scientific and technological departments have extensively launched the “green certificate” training as well as scientific and technological training for young peasants. The Ministry of Agriculture has carried out the “Sunshine Project” to train peasants working in cities, and the rural enterprises have provided all sorts of job training for their employees.

#### 6.8 CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF CONTENTS AND METHODS OF LITERACY EDUCATION ACCORDING TO CHARACTERISTICS OF ADULT LEARNING

To provide guidance to literacy teaching, the Ministry of Education formulated in October 1992 *The Teaching Guidelines for Literacy Education*, and issued in 2002 *The Guiding Opinion on Curriculum and Teaching Reform of Literacy Education (Trial)*. These documents have pronounced clear stipulations on the guiding thought, concrete targets, basic principles, and standards and requirements for the curriculum and teaching reform of literacy education, implementation of the reform, development and management of curriculum resources for literacy education, management and appraisal of literacy curricula, and policy measures to guarantee the reform of such curricula.

During the literacy teaching practice, many areas have earnestly researched the features and rules of adult literacy learning and have summed up a number of methods for literacy learning and teaching, such as the Pinyin (alphabetic) Method, Representative Characters As Phonetic Symbols Method, Mark Pronunciations with Familiar Characters Method, Radicals Categorization Method, Picture Method, and Objects Method. These methods have been applied flexibly in the teaching process, rendering literacy learning more effective.

Textbook development is the critical step for raising the quality of literacy education. The provincial-level educational departments take prior responsibility for compiling the textbooks, and the counties and townships can compile some supplementary materials in light of their local features and customs. Thus the unified standards and diverse demands are balanced. In more than 10 years, more than 100 literacy textbooks and nearly 1,000 textbooks for continuing education have been compiled. The educational departments of many places have compiled the textbooks and reading materials suitable for the local needs or especially for women literacy. To strengthen compilation of textbooks for literacy education and achieve higher quality of literacy textbooks, the Ministry of Education and the provinces and cities have separately held training classes on compilation of the textbooks and materials for literacy and continuing education, and published

about 150,000 copies of 11 categories of books under the collective title *A Series of Readings for Literacy Education and Continuing Education*, with financial support from UNESCO. The educational departments have also intensified the management and appraisal of the textbooks, thus effectively advancing the quality of literacy and continuing education.

#### 6.9 TRAINING OF MORE QUALIFIED TEACHERS

In order to guarantee the quality and effect of literacy education, China has paid attention to the cultivation and training of the teachers and administrative staff of this field. Following the provisions of the Ministry of Education on deployment, use and training of personnel for literacy education and rural adult education, these teachers shall continuously improve their teaching quality through training, self-study, and other channels.

The educational departments at all levels are responsible for training of the personnel for literacy education. Specifically, the educational department of the central government trains the provincial-level personnel for literacy education and rural adult education; the provincial-level department trains the personnel of the prefecture-level personnel; the prefecture-level department trains the county-level personnel; the county-level department trains the township-level personnel; and the township-level department trains the village-level personnel. In short, it is a system of stratified and universal training. Such training has promoted the understanding of policies, theoretical qualification, and working ability of the personnel for literacy and rural adult education.

#### 6.10 MULTIPLE CHANNELS OF FUNDRAISING FOR LITERACY EDUCATION

*The Regulation on Literacy Work* issued by the Chinese Government clearly states, “The funds needed for illiteracy elimination shall be raised through multiple channels.” In December 1995, the National Education Commission and the Ministry of Finance jointly printed and distributed *The Notice on Funds for Literacy Work* and thereby gave specific stipulations on literacy funding. Currently, the funds for literacy education in China have diverse origins, mainly including the following: the funds raised by townships, villages, sub-districts and institutions for their own use, payment from the funds for employee education of the enterprises and institutions of social undertaking, the government expenditures for the educational undertaking and educational surcharges, donations by social forces and individuals, and the fiscal subsidies by local governments at all levels. To promote national literacy work, since 1995, the central government has annually invested 8 million Yuan to award the areas that have given advanced performance in the literacy work, especially literacy for the poverty-stricken areas, ethnic minorities, and women, in the central and western regions. Literacy projects have been launched for the poverty-stricken areas in the provinces (autonomous regions) where illiteracy has not been basically eliminated among young adults; for ethnic minorities with a population of less than 100,000; and for women in the provinces (autonomous regions or municipality directly under the central government) that have basically eliminated illiteracy among young adults. Besides, in the areas covered by the second phase of “The National Project of Compulsory Education for Poverty-Stricken Areas”, the funds for training teaching staff are also utilized for training the teachers for literacy education. The governments at all levels, together with their educational departments, have also earmarked special funds as subsidy and prize exclusively for literacy projects. To consolidate the results and further

advance the literacy work, the central government has decided to increase its special funds for literacy education to 50 million Yuan since 2007. Support will be provided mainly to elimination of young adult illiteracy for ethnic minorities and women and will favor the central and western regions, with consideration also paid to certain areas in the eastern region that face challenging tasks or have given outstanding performance in the literacy work.

#### 6.11 ESTABLISHMENT OF STANDARDS AND SYSTEMS OF INSPECTION, ACCEPTANCE, SUPERVISION AND ASSESSMENT FOR LITERACY EDUCATION

*The Regulation on Literacy Work* issued by the Chinese Government in 1993 clearly defines the minimum standards of personal literacy and the standards for accepting the administrative areas as having basically eliminated illiteracy. The minimum standards of literacy are as follows: The individual has obtained the basic ability to read, write and calculate, and can recognize 1,500 Chinese characters if he is a peasant or 2,000 Chinese characters if he is an urban citizen or a staff with enterprises or institutions of social undertaking.

To unify the standards, regulate the procedures, and ensure the quality of inspection and acceptance, the former National Education Commission in 1993 printed and distributed some documents including *The Measure for Inspection and Assessment of County-Level Entities Undertaking Literacy Education among Young Adults (Trial)*, setting up the systems of inspection, acceptance, supervision and assessment of such counties (or cities, or districts). At present, China has formed a stratified system of inspection and acceptance, whereby each level of government carries out the inspection and acceptance of its subordinate entities. These systems have effectively facilitated the literacy work in this country.

In addition, since 1990, China has established a system of regularly commending and awarding the advanced entities and individuals of the literacy work. The former National Education Commission set up the “China Literacy Award”, and joined hands with the All China Women’s Federation to set up the “Women Literacy Award” and cooperated with the Ministry of Finance to set up the “Award to Advanced Areas of Literacy Work”. In total, 655 advanced entities, 507 advanced schools, and 1365 individuals that have made outstanding progresses in the literacy education or rural adult education have received these awards, lending a great momentum to this work.

#### **Exhibit 7. The Measure for Inspection and Assessment of County-Level Entities Undertaking Literacy Education among Young Adults (Trial)**

##### **Chapter I. The Scope and Entities for Inspection and Assessment**

Article 1: The government of the provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities directly under the central government shall organize and implement the inspection and acceptance of the county-level entities that have undertaken literacy education among young adults, in accordance with the related documents and this Measure. The National Education Commission shall direct, supervise and check this work.

Article 2: The targets to be inspected and assessed are the counties, cities with no subordinate district, districts under the jurisdiction of a city, and any other county-level entity recognized by a provincial-level government that have undertaken literacy education



among young adults.

### Chapter II. Indexes for Inspection and Assessment

Article 3: The assessment standards for the entities that have eliminated illiteracy among young adults are as follows:

1. Of the population born after October 1st, 1949 and aged 15 or above, the non-illiterate population reaches 95% in rural areas and 98% in urban areas;
2. Basic education has been popularized;
3. The survival rate of the people who have cast off illiteracy in recent 3 years reaches 95%;
4. The subordinate administrative villages and urban residential communities as well as the enterprises and institutions of social undertaking of the same level shall all meet the above standards (except the areas with special difficulties);
5. The subordinate townships (towns) and administrative villages have each established a cultural and technical school for peasants or a teaching station of the same nature (except the areas with sparse population).

Article 4: Indexes for School Conditions

1. The organs for administration of adult education have been established at both the county- and town-levels, and have been staffed with full-time or part-time personnel as per national and provincial provisions;
2. The cultural and technical schools for peasants or the teaching stations of the same nature of both the townships and villages have been staffed with full-time or part-time officers and teachers, have been equipped with basic teaching facilities, and have been conducting education and training for peasants as planned;
3. The provisions by the State Council and the National Education Commission as well as those of the provinces, autonomous regions, or municipalities on the educational expenditures for literacy education and peasant education have been earnestly enforced.

### Chapter III. Procedures of Inspection and Assessment

Article 5: When a county (or city or district) that has been undertaking literacy education among young adults regards itself qualified for the above standards after its internal inspection and assessment, it shall apply first to the administrative office of the prefecture or the government of the city and, if the said office or government has reviewed and approved the application, further apply to the government of the province, autonomous region, or municipality directly under the central government.

Article 6: The government of a province, autonomous region and municipality shall annually form an inspection and acceptance team consisting of related departments to organize the inspection and acceptance according to related documents and this Measure. When an entity has met all the indexes, it shall be accepted as a county (or city or district) that has eliminated illiteracy among young adults. The reports on the inspection and acceptance shall be submitted to the National Education Commission by the end of July in each year.

Article 7: The National Education Commission shall conduct annually selective examination of the counties (cities, districts) that have been accepted as having eliminated illiteracy among young adults by the provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government.

### Chapter IV. Commendation

Article 8: Any county (or city or district) that has been inspected and accepted as having eliminated

illiteracy among young adults shall be granted the title of “A County (City, District) Having Eliminated Illiteracy among Young Adults”, and be awarded a medal and prize money.

Article 9: Based on the reports by the provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government, the National Education Commission shall conduct selective examination of the counties (cities, districts) that have eliminated illiteracy among young adults, and then announce the annual list of such entities, and commend and prize them.

Article 10: Any county (city, district) that has been accepted as, and commended for, having eliminated illiteracy among young adults shall take necessary steps to consolidate the attainment and undertake continuing education afterwards. Should it fail to meet the specified standards during the re-examination, the authority that originally awarded it the honor of “A County (City, District) Having Eliminated Illiteracy among Young Adults” shall deprive it of this honor (Unless the failure has resulted from Force Majeure).

#### 6.12 ACTIVE EXPANSION OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR LITERACY EDUCATION

Since the 1980's, China has engaged in extensive and fruitful cooperation on literacy education with UNESCO, UNICEF, Asian Cultural Center, and ICAE. It has organized an international literacy conference, cooperatively held training classes for literacy teachers and compiled textbooks for literacy education and continuing education, participated in the activities related to international literacy awards, and carried out population education in rural schools. Furthermore, it has undertaken some research projects such as “The Case Study of Literacy Education for Ethnic Minorities of China” and “Facilitating Rural Development with Information Technologies”. Such cooperation has largely boosted the literacy education of China.

The achievements of China have won full recognition from the international community. Since 1984, through the selection and appraisal organized by UNESCO for international awards for literacy education, totally 16 entities of China have won prizes, of which 7 have won major prizes such as the Noma Literacy Prize, the Nadezhda K. Krupskaya International Cultural Prize, and the King Sejong Literacy Prize.