

# **Status, Problem and Countermeasure of Statistics on China Rural Relief Work**

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The Ministry of Civil Affairs of the People's Republic of China is a responsible department under the State Council in charge of social administrative affairs. Its major responsibilities are responsible for social relief, social welfare and the subsistence living guarantee for urban and rural residents, and social administration affairs, such as disaster relief, the development of grassroots democratic politics. The work of civil affairs is related with people's livelihood, people's right and people's benefit, which are closely relative to the people's life, especially the poor mass. The statistics on civil affairs is responsible to provide the information to reflect the development of civil affairs, to master the implementation of civil policies and to study and make principle of civil work.

According to the sample investigation of the NBS, there is 21.48 million of rural people living in absolute poverty at the end of 2006 and 35.5 million low-income people, that the problem of food and clothing of the impoverished population has been basically solved and but it is unstable.

According to the statistical reporting form of the Ministry Civil Affairs, there are about 31.735 million poverty peoples receiving relief on a regular basis from the civil administration departments by end of July of 2007. The above data still do no include the traditional temporary relief population (e.g. food shortage relief during winter and spring period), rural medical care population, which work is in progress, and relief for victims' live and rebuilding disaster-hit areas caused by the natural disaster. At present, government expenditure for rural relief and disaster relief will be approximately 16 to 17 billion yuan. Moreover, the relief input enlarges unceasingly. The rural population living in poverty obtained the social insurance initially, but actual allowance level is low. Per capita expenditure of rural subsistence living guarantee is only 28.8 yuan. Therefore, based on the data of rural population living in poverty from the departments of civil affairs, we do research and discuss on the development, problem, and countermeasure of China rural relief.

## **I. Status of China Rural Relief Work**

### **1. Disaster relief**

In 2006, the countrywide crops disaster area reached 41.091 million hectares, increasing 5.9% to the last year. Among them, area of no crop reached 5.409 million hectares, increasing 17.7% to the last year; death caused by disaster reached 3186 persons, increasing 28.7% to the last year; collapse houses reached 1.933 million, decreasing 331 thousand houses to the last year; the direct economy loss reached 25.281 billion yuan, increasing 23.8% to the last year. It is the second heavy disaster year since 1998 year, in which year an especial serious flood disaster happened. By the end of 2006, local governments received 4.94 billion yuan disaster relief funds appropriated by the Central Government. All levels of government organize the disaster relief work in time. The Ministry of Civil Affairs started up 40 times of emergency relief system and sent out 60 working teams to the disaster areas to guide local governments to transfer and resettle 13.845 million population, to rebuild 1.888 million collapse houses, to implement effectively the typhoon, flooding, drought and so on each kind of natural disasters emergency relief, and do well the relief work during the food shortage period of spring and winter and in drought areas. These relief works ensure the essence demand of clothes, food, accommodation, water and medical care. In the disaster areas, popular sentiment is calm, society keeps stable, and rebuilding works have been carried on intensely but orderly.

2. To positively develop rural subsistence living guarantees system and normalize the rural Five Guarantees system

Rural subsistence living guarantees system is positively developed and the work of rural subsistence living guarantees makes a great achievement. On the basis of experiment, the State Council decides to entirely establish the rural subsistence living guarantees system in the national wide in the first half of the year. At June 26, national working conference on establishing rural subsistence living guarantees system was held and *the notice on establishing rural subsistence living guarantees system* was also issued. The notice is the creed document to establish and advance on rural subsistence living guarantees system. It will be helpful to establish a lasting mechanism to safeguard the subsistence of rural needy mass and extend the coverage of rural subsistence living guarantees.

By the end of July of 2007, 31 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities have been established rural subsistence living guarantees system. 2512 counties have been implemented the subsistence living guarantees work. There are 23.115 million persons, 10.746 million households obtained the rural subsistence living guarantees, increasing 141 % and 126 % to the last year separately. In the areas without rural subsistence living guarantees system, rural extremely poor relief system was brought into effect. By the end of

July of 2007, there are 1.466 million households and 3.553 million persons obtained extremely poor relief. It is due to some families of extremely poor relief transferred to rural subsistence living guarantees, the number of extremely poor relief household decreased than the last year.

Rural five guarantees system has been normalizing day by day and allowance level has been some increasing. By the end of July of 2007, there are 5.03 million persons and 4.75 million households obtained rural five guarantees all over the country. Among them, there 1.05 million persons were accommodated at the service institution of rural five guarantees, and 3.98 million persons were separately accommodated at family.

### 3. To advance the medical care system actively.

There is 2.12 billion yuan fiscal fund actually used to medical care all the year in 2006. Of which, there are 1.43 billion yuan to support to join the urban and rural medical care from the Central Government. This ensured every region to do the work of medical care. Expenditure of rural medical care reached 1.31 billion yuan, of which, funds to support to join the new rural cooperative medical service reached 0.26 billion yuan, funds to support serious illness rescue reached 0.88 billion yuan. Total 1.559 million impoverished peasants were supported, of which, 13.171 million person-times supported to join the medical care by civil affair departments, per capita 19.7 yuan. 2.419 million person-times supported serious illness relief by civil affair departments, per capita 366 yuan.

### 4. Social donation

To promote the social donation vigorously. The activity of "Sending Warm, Donating Love" were carried out all over the country. By the end of 2006, there are 33000 regular social donation stations or charity supermarkets (of which, 4632 charity supermarkets). A national social donation net has been formed. Donated cash collected by civil affairs' departments and charity organizations come to 8.31 billion yuan, donated material converted into money 0.64 billion yuan, donated clothes and quilts 71.236 million pieces, of which, 19.221 million pieces of cotton clothes and quilts. Donated cash indirectly collected by other departments come to 300 million yuan, donated clothes and quilts 25.186 million pieces, of which, 3.88 million pieces of cotton clothes and quilts, donated material converted into money 67.78 million yuan. These donations benefited 32.591 million person-times needy mass. In the activity of "Sending Warm, Donating Love", Central Government departments and army organs donated 47.699 million yuan and 230 thousand pieces of clothes and quilts. It commendably supports the work to settle the basic living during the winter of needy mass in disaster-hit areas.

To implement "Outline of China Charity Development (2006-2010)", to promote to carry out the policy of duty decreasing or duty free of charity donation, to support all kind of charity organizations to engage in various charity activities, to keep on organize the appraisal activity of "China Philanthropy Prize", to propagandize the topic of charity positively, to promote the construction of charity culture, to promote to set the good fashion of helping poor and aiding needy, honesty and friendliness, mutually help, dedication to the society.

## **II. China Statistical System on Rural Relief**

### 1. To coordinate intra-ministry statistical items

Since 1999, our ministry has coordinated intra-ministry statistical items and finally form two sets of system: *Statistical System of Civil Affairs* and *Statistical System of Disaster*. The rural relief statistics has been included in the statistical system of civil affairs and statistical items on rural relief have been formed.

### 2. To perfect every laws and regulations

In recent years, our ministry has constituted tens of statistical regulations, including rural poor relief. We coordinated the intra-ministry statistical sources. Now, all data, excluding these of lose of natural disaster which is evaluated by experts according to the system on disaster statistics, are collected by the charge department on statistics, the department of finance and ministry affair. It will prevent one data coming from many departments and repetitive statistics. Moreover, we take up with the standardization of information system software interface. We actively seek after the way to pick up the administration record from the operation administration software and build the statistical directory database as the base of statistical data. It will alleviate the burden of grass roots and economize the statistical cost.

### 3. To build the electronic statistics account system joining with the system of reporting forms

In the recent years, our ministry has developed the system of periodical reporting forms. The data can be updated. The important data can be reported monthly and the entire data can be reported annually. The system can rapidly and accurately reflect the recent development trend of civil affairs. Our ministry has also developed an electronic statistics account system. The system have registered detailedly the basic information of civil objects, such as the name, sex, family population, income, address, identification card number and monthly relief money of rural extremely poor population to master the elementary working of grass roots civil administration and supervise the grass roots civil administration. The information system

has been realized the function to get the data of reporting forms from the electronic statistics account system to alleviate the workload of filling the reporting forms.

4. To regulate the release forms and time of statistical information on civil affairs

We release the statistical information on civil affairs at the web of Ministry of Civil Affairs by reporting forms and development reports and regulate the release time of monthly data, annual data and development report to issue the development of civil affairs for the society termly.

5. To go to the grass roots and bring up statistical personnel at grass roots directly

In the past 5 years, we train in rotation more than 5 thousand statistical person-times above county levels and enhance the operation quality and ability. Now we have been built a special statistical troop of mastering the operation with high quality.

6. To build online communion platform of statistical information (between the Centre and every provinces)

In order to adapt the demand of informationlization, we adequately use the modern office means to build the communion platform of statistical information. All information, files and data can be transferred online. All statistical personnel can communicate online.

7. To build the evaluation system on statistical working of civil affairs

We have been issued the *Evaluation System on Statistical Working of Civil Affairs*. We regularly issue the working situation of every province of civil affairs. At the year end, we issue the situation and honor the outstanding units or personnel. These will mobilize the enthusiasm of statistical personnel of civil affairs and promote the work of civil affairs statistics.

### **III. The Existing Problem of Rural Relief**

#### **1. Lack of input**

Now, rural relief input is near 20 billion yuan. It is far from the need of millions of rural poor. The proportion of rural relief expenditure to government finance expenditure is less 0.5 %. It is very low. Especially, the cancellation of agricultural tax makes grass roots government lack of money to support rural five guarantees. This induces to narrow the rural relief coverage. Part of relief objects can not obtain the relief in time or enough relief. The relief level is low also. By the end of July of 2007, rural five guarantees expenditure is 3.2 billion yuan, and beneficiary is 35.093 million persons. Per capita expenditure is less 20 yuan. Because the relief policy, such as rural subsistence living guarantees system, was started

lately, the outlay input is seriously lack. By the end of July of 2007, rural subsistence living guarantees expenditure is 3.79 billion yuan, and beneficiary is 23.115 million persons. Per capita expenditure is less 30 yuan.

#### 2. Absence of Policies

At present, our economy is developing just now. Government support is gradually increasing. After all, rural relief was started just now, many policies and laws is not perfect, especially rural subsistence living guarantees system was started at the half of this year, many problems on policy are appearing, such as extending coverage of rural subsistence living guarantees system, raising the allowance level and perfecting the system. Many working are waiting for development and exploration, such as the cognizance of object of rural subsistence living guarantees, the research of criterion to check and ratify, guarantee of operation outlay.

#### 3. Imperfect of statistical methods

Statistics on rural relief should be further perfected and relative statistical indicators also be consummated. Especially the statistics on assets and financial affairs reporting form of village committee and rural special economy association should be enhanced. Moreover, it is urgent to solve the linkage between rural relief and other policies, such as rural endowment insurance and medical insurance, rural poor supporting, insurance and relief.

### **IV. Countermeasure of Rural Relief**

#### 1. To perfect the legal system

The State Council has been constituted "*Working Regulation on Rural Five Guarantees*". "*Law of Protecting Elder Rights*" also makes relative regulation. But it is necessary to prefect the law system to protect the rights of rural impoverished people.

#### 2. To increase input

In order to extend the coverage of rural social security and raise relief level, it is urgently to increase input. That is to increase the government finance input, also including leading society strength to participate in rural relief, and to accelerate the socialization course of rural relief. The other ways include guiding the rural household to save themselves and help mutually, raise relief fund from rural collective.

#### 3. To pay attention to the linkage among the systems

It is the duty of all level governments. Rural relief is complicated system engineering. It is necessary for every department to cooperate and make concerted effort to do well rural relief work.

#### 4. To improve the statistics methods

Because rural root organization and rural special association are

weaker, it is necessary to strengthen to establish statistical system, perfect the statistical indicator system and do well the statistical work to provide accurate and complete information for rural relief.

#### **V. Suggestion on Rural Poverty Statistics and Rural Relief Statistics**

In theory, rural people living in absolute poverty under the survey of statistical bureau are belonging to the rural relief. At present, poor population under the survey of civil departments have been listed their name and detail address. We hope that the statistical departments and civil departments can communicate and cooperate. The two departments can exchange the statistical survey method, coverage, scope each other, contrast and share the data. We hope to realize the maximum intersection and intercommunication.