

03.15-Poverty in China

Poverty in China

Just a little bit richer

How much has a **flagship** official scheme played in China's impressive record of reducing poverty?

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Vocab

1. **flagship** n. 王牌; 主打产品; 旗舰产品 The **flagship** of a group of things that are owned or produced by a particular organization is the most important one.

e.g. The company plans to open a **flagship** store in New York this month. 公司计划本月在纽约开一家旗舰店。

THE villagers of Dingjiayan **subsist on** corn, potatoes, sunflowers and the few vegetables they grow. They sell the **surplus** and buy meat and a few other necessities in the nearby county town of Tianzhen. Its **mud-and-brick** buildings, and its setting among **dusty** hills in the north-eastern corner of Shanxi province, offer little to the occasional visitor to distinguish it from countless other parts of China where hard work brings but a **meagre** living. Yet Tianzhen county, of which Dingjiayan is a part, is one of just 592 areas that the central government **designates** as "**impoverished**".

Vocab

1. **subsist** v. ~ (on sth) to manage to stay alive, especially with limited food or money (尤指靠有限的食物或钱) 维持生活, 度日

e.g. Old people often subsist on very small incomes. 老人往往靠十分微薄的收入艰难度日。

2. **surplus** n. an amount that is extra or more than you need 过剩; 剩余; 过剩量; 剩余额
e.g. Wheat was **in surplus** that year. 那一年小麦过剩。

3. **mud-and-brick** 泥砖的

4. **dusty** adj. full of dust; covered with dust 布满灰尘的; 灰尘覆盖的

5. **meagre** adj. = **paltry** small in quantity and poor in quality 少量的; 劣质的

e.g. She supplements her meagre income by cleaning at night. 她靠夜间做清洁工来补充其微薄的收入。

6. **designate** v. ~ sth (as) sth | ~ sth (as being sth) to say officially that sth has a particular character or name; to describe sth in a particular way 命名; 指定

e.g. This area has been designated (as) a National Park. 本区已定为国家公园。

7. **impoverished** adj. very poor; without money 赤贫的; 不名一文的

e.g. the impoverished areas of the city 这个城市的贫民区

Sentence

Its mud-and-brick buildings, and its setting among dusty hills in the north-eastern corner of Shanxi province, offer little to the occasional visitor to distinguish it from countless other parts of China where hard work brings but a meagre living.

主干: buildings **offer** little to visitor to distinguish it. 谓语是 offer

and its setting among dusty hills... 这里指明了这些 buildings 的位置, 并列的成分

offer little to the occasional visitor to distinguish it 这里的 it 指的是上文的 Dingjiayan from countless other parts of China where hard work brings but a meagre living. 从数不尽的中国其他地方, where 从句在这里修饰这些地方, 即辛勤劳作带来的只是微薄的生活

China's official **threshold** for rural poverty is an annual income of 2,300 yuan (\$370) per person. But the **criteria** for **classifying** a village or county are complex and often **revised**. They include comparisons of poverty rates and average incomes with those of the province, adjustments for inflation, quotas on the number of villages that may count as poor and a ban on including villages that own collective enterprises, whatever their income level. Though dozens of places have been listed and delisted every few years since the 1990s, the total has remained curiously **fixed**—at 592.

Vocab

1. **threshold** n. the level at which sth starts to happen or have an effect 阈; 界; 起始点

e.g. My earnings are just above the **tax threshold** (= more than the amount at which you start paying tax). 我的收入刚刚超过征税起点。

2. **criteria** n. (criterion的复数) a standard or principle by which sth is judged, or with the help of which a decision is made (评判或作决定的) 标准, 准则, 原则

3. **classify** v. to arrange sth in groups according to features that they have in common 分类; 归类

4. **revise** v. to change sth, such as a book or an estimate, in order to correct or improve it 修改, 修订 (书刊、估算等)

e.g. We may have to revise this figure upwards. 我们也许要将这个数字往上调一调。

5. **comparison** n. ~ (of A and/ to/ with B) | ~ (between A and B) an occasion when two or more people or things are compared 对比; 相比

6. **inflation** n. 通货膨胀 **Inflation** is a general increase in the prices of goods and services in a country.

7. **fixed** adj. staying the same; not changing or able to be changed 固定的; 不变的; 不能变的

e.g. The money has been invested for a **fixed period**. 这笔款项已作定期投资。

Sentence

They include comparisons of poverty rates and average incomes with those of the province, adjustments for inflation, quotas on the number of villages that may count as poor and a ban on including villages that own collective enterprises, whatever their income level.

主干: They include comparisons of...with those of... 其中 **comparisons** 的比较对象是与本省比较, comparison of A with B, 与本省的平困率和人均收入的比较

that may count as poor 指前面提的那些可以算作贫困。

and a ban on including villages that own collective enterprises, whatever their income level. 这里的 that 是修饰 villages 标明拥有集体企业的农村。

An “impoverished” **designation** brings **substantial subsidies**. But Ding Tianyu, who has lived in Dingjiayan for all his 73 years, says he hardly notices. Most households earn about 10,000 yuan a year, he says, and get a subsidy of 80 yuan for each mu (614 square metres) of land they farm. “I have five mu,” Mr Ding says. “When there is enough rain I am fine, and when I get the subsidy I feel just a little bit richer.”

Vocab

1. **designation** n. a name, title or description 名称; 称号; 称呼

2. **substantial** adj. =considerable large in amount, value or importance 大量的；价值巨大的；重大的

e.g. He ate a substantial breakfast. 他吃了一顿丰盛的早餐。

3. **subsidy** n. 补贴;补助金;津贴 A **subsidy** is money that is paid by a government or other authority in order to help an industry or business, or to pay for a public service.

e.g. They've also slashed state subsidies to utilities and transportation. 他们还大幅削减了对公共事业和交通运输的政府补贴。

With **bustling** shops and a fair number of **pricey** cars on its roads, Tianzhen's county town does not, by Chinese standards, feel impoverished. There is little **disclosure** about how subsidies are used, says a restaurant owner. "We are told a lot of it goes into the local **credit union** and that we can apply for loans there, but they only lend to people with good connections."

Vocab

1. **bustling** adj. full of people moving about in a busy way 繁忙的；熙熙攘攘的

e.g. The market was bustling with life. 市场上生机勃勃。

2. **pricey** adj. expensive 昂贵的

3. **disclosure** n. 公开;透露;泄露;揭露 **Disclosure** is the act of giving people new or secret information.

e.g. ...unauthorised newspaper **disclosures**. 报纸擅自的透露

4. **credit union** an organization that lends money to its members at low rates of interest 互助储金会，信用合作社（向会员提供低息贷款）

Sentence

"We are told a lot of it goes into the local credit union and that we can apply for loans there, but they only lend to people with good connections."

主干：We are told a lot of it

people **with** good connections. with 在这里的意思：having or carrying sth 有；具有；带有

e.g. a man with a suitcase 提衣箱的男子

In 2012, when the list was last updated, Xinshao county in Hunan in south-central China was added. Local officials used the county's official website to **trumpet** this "exceptional good **tidings**" after two years of "**arduous** efforts" and "**untold** hardships". A large roadside board added its "**ardent** congratulations". After nationwide criticism, the officials accepted that their words had been badly chosen. But their cheer was understandable: the official designation was worth an extra 560m yuan for the county each year from the central government.

Vocab

1. **trumpet** v. ~ sth (as sth) to talk about sth publicly in a proud or enthusiastic way 宣扬；鼓吹；吹嘘

e.g. Their marriage was trumpeted as the society wedding of the year. 他们联姻给宣扬成当年的豪门良缘。

2. **tidings** n. news 消息；音讯；音信

e.g. I am the bearer of **good tidings**. 我带来了好消息。

3. **arduous** adj. involving a lot of effort and energy, especially over a period of time 艰苦的；艰难的

e.g. The work was arduous. 这项工作很艰巨。

4. **untold** adj. (强调糟糕或令人不快的程度) 无以名状的, 难以估量的 You can use **untold** to emphasize how bad or unpleasant something is.

e.g. This might do **untold** damage to her health. 这也许会给她的健康带来难以估量的伤害。

5. **ardent** adj. = **passionate** 热烈的; 激情的 very enthusiastic and showing strong feelings about sth/ sb

The episode caused many to question the value of the system and the **perverse** incentives it creates for local governments. A **commentary** last year in the Legal Daily claimed that many places were misusing the funds and had **fudged** their figures to **qualify as** impoverished. Officials from the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development, which manages the list, have acknowledged widespread **abuses**. In February it banned **lavish** new buildings and “image projects” in officially designated poor areas.

Vocab

1. **perverse** adj. 执拗的; 任性的; 不通情理的 showing deliberate determination to behave in a way that most people think is wrong, unacceptable or unreasonable

e.g. a perverse decision (= one that most people do not expect and think is wrong) 悖谬的决定

2. **commentary** n. (尤指电台或电视台所作的) 实况报道, 现场解说 a spoken description of an event that is given while it is happening, especially on the radio or television

3. **fudge** v. 篡改; 捏造 (事实, 数字) adjust or manipulate (facts or figures) so as to present a desired picture

4. **qualify** v. ~ (as sth) 取得资格 (或学历); 合格 to reach the standard of ability or knowledge needed to do a particular job, for example by completing a course of study or passing exams

5. **abuse** n. 滥用; 妄用 **Abuse** of something is the use of it in a wrong way or for a bad purpose.

e.g. What went on here was an **abuse** of power. 这里所发生的事是一种滥用职权的行为。

6. **lavish** adj. 铺张的; 奢侈的; 盛大的 If you describe something as **lavish**, you mean that it is very elaborate and impressive and a lot of money has been spent on it.

State television reported on two counties, one in Ningxia and one in Hubei, where local governments spent 100m yuan each on new headquarters. In March, during China’s annual full legislative session, the council’s poverty head, Liu Yongfu, **raised** a different question about the programme. He told the Southern Metropolis, a newspaper, that hundreds of counties would be **taken off** the list by 2020. “If a poor area as big as a county still exists, then can Chinese society still be called **moderately prosperous**?” he asked.

Vocab

1. **raise** v. 提起, 提出 (问题、反对等) If you **raise** a subject, an objection, or a question, you mention it or bring it to someone's attention.

e.g. He had been consulted and had **raised** no objections. 事先征求了他的意见, 他并没有提出异议。

2. **take off** v. 撤销, 取消 (服务或娱乐) If something such as a service or entertainment **is taken off**, it is withdrawn so that people can no longer use it or watch it.

3. **moderately prosperous** 小康

e.g. **moderately prosperous society**: 小康社会

Sentence

State television reported on two counties, one in Ningxia and one in Hubei, where local governments spent 100m yuan each on new headquarters.

主干: State television reported on two counties

one in Ningxia and one in Hubei 这是 two counties 的同位语

where local governments spent 100m yuan each on new headquarters. 这个定语从句先行词是 two counties

Attainment of a “moderately prosperous society” is a goal that previous Chinese leaders set and that Xi Jinping, the current president, has adopted as well. Much progress has been made since reforms began **in earnest** in the late 1970s. China claims to have lifted 620m people out of poverty since then. Others may quibble over that number—the World Bank puts it at 500m—but few question the premise that China deserves immense credit for alleviating so much poverty.

Vocab

1. **attainment** n. **success in achieving sth** 达到；获得

e.g. The attainment of his ambitions was still a dream. 他要实现的抱负仍然是一个梦想。

2. **earnest** (更) 严肃地; (更) 郑重地 If something is done or happens **in earnest**, it happens to a much greater extent and more seriously than before.

e.g. Campaigning will begin **in earnest** tomorrow...竞选将于明日郑重开始。

3. **quibble** v. ~ (about/ over sth) **to argue or complain about a small matter or an unimportant detail** (为小事) 争论, 发牢骚; 斤斤计较; 吹毛求疵

e.g. It isn't worth quibbling over such a small amount. 不值得为这样的小数目斤斤计较。

4. **premise** n. **a statement or an idea that forms the basis for a reasonable line of argument** 前提; 假定

e.g. the basic premise of her argument 她的论证的基本前提

5. **credit for** ~ (for sth) **praise or approval because you are responsible for sth good that has happened** 赞扬; 称赞; 认可

e.g. He's a player who rarely seems to get the credit he deserves. 他这个选手好像很少得到应得的赞扬。

6. **alleviate** v. **to make sth less severe** 减轻; 缓和; 缓解

e.g. A number of measures were taken to alleviate the problem. 采取了一系列措施缓解这个问题。

Sentence

1. has adopted as well. 也采用了这个目标

2. Others may quibble over that number—the World Bank puts it at 500m—but few question the premise that China deserves immense credit for alleviating so much poverty.

主干: Others may quibble over that number 这里的 that 是指“那个”的意思, 即 620m people

—the World Bank puts it at 500m 这个破折号用来解释 quibble over 的原因

—but few question... 这个破折号来表示转折

that China deserves immense credit for alleviating so much poverty. 这个定语从句的先行词是 the premise

Much still remains, however. A little **uphill** from Dingjiayan sits a smaller village, Dingyuanyao. Its higher elevation means it gets less water, and a resident says most of its 90 residents will **clear** just 1,000 yuan a year after paying for seeds and **fertiliser**. Some own motorbikes and televisions, and they are grateful for the basic

health insurance they receive. They laugh **in unison** when asked if they receive subsidies. The arrival of electricity 30 years ago was a vast improvement, they agree. But little has changed in their lives since then.

Vocab

1. **uphill** adv. 靠山顶；上坡 If something or someone is **uphill** or is moving **uphill**, they are near the top of a hill or are going up a slope.

2. **clear** adj. **=net** remaining when taxes, costs, etc. have been taken away (扣除税项、成本等后) 净的, 纯的

e.g. They had made a clear profit of £2 000. 他们已赚得 2 000 英镑的净利。

3. **fertiliser** n. a substance added to soil to make plants grow more successfully 肥料

4. **in unison** if people do or say sth **in unison**, they all do it at the same time (做事、说话) 一起, 一齐

From the print edition: China

Poverty in China Just a little bit richer

贫困中国：富了一点点

How much has a flagship official scheme played in China's impressive record of reducing poverty?

这套官方主打的策略在中国显著地减少贫困中发挥了多大的作用？

The villagers of Dingjiayan subsist on corn, potatoes, sunflowers and the few vegetables they grow. They sell the surplus and buy meat and a few other necessities in the nearby county town of Tianzhen. Its mud-and-brick buildings, and its setting among dusty hills in the north-eastern corner of Shanxi province, offer little to the occasional visitor to distinguish it from countless other parts of China where hard work brings but a meagre living. Yet Tianzhen county, of which Dingjiayan is a part, is one of just 592 areas that the central government designates as "impoverished".

丁家烟的村民以种植玉米、土豆、向日葵和其他蔬菜维持生计。他们将剩余的拿到邻近的天镇县出售，再买回肉类和其他一些必需品。这个村庄坐落于山西省的东北角，泥砖结构的房屋和满布灰尘的山让大部分偶尔来访的游客难以看出其与中国其他地方的差别。在这些地方，勤劳只带来了拮据的生活。而丁家烟所属的天镇县是中央政府指定的592个“贫困地区”之一。

China's official threshold for rural poverty is an annual income of 2,300 yuan (\$370) per person. But the criteria for classifying a village or county are complex and often revised. They include comparisons of poverty rates and average incomes with those of the province, adjustments for inflation, quotas on the number of villages that may count as poor and a ban on including villages that own collective enterprises, whatever their income level. Though dozens of places have been listed and delisted every few years since the 1990s, the total has remained curiously fixed—at 592.

中国农村贫困地区的官方标准是人均年收入低于2300元人民币（370美元）。但这个用于界定贫困村庄或县城的标准非常复杂且常常被修改。其中包括与本省的贫困率和人均收入的比较、通胀率的修正、贫困村庄的配额、以及禁止将有集体企业的村庄被算作“贫困”，不管其收入水平如何。尽管自20世纪90年代开始，每隔几年都有数十个地方被列入或者被剔除出

名单，但是贫困地区的总数仍然很奇怪的固定在592个。

An "impoverished" designation brings substantial subsidies. But Ding Tianyu, who has lived in Dingjiayan for all his 73 years, says he hardly notices. Most households earn about 10,000 yuan a year, he says, and get a subsidy of 80 yuan for each mu (614 square metres) of land they farm. "I have five mu," Mr Ding says. "When there is enough rain I am fine, and when I get the subsidy I feel just a little bit richer."

获得“贫困地区”的名额意味着能够获得大量补贴。但是住在丁家烟的73岁村民丁天宇表示他几乎没觉察有任何变化。他说，大多数家庭年收入约为一万元人民币，而且每亩（614平方米）耕地有80元的补贴。丁天宇说：“我有五亩地。”“当雨水充足的时候，我的生活还不错。有了补贴，我也只是觉得生活富余了一点而已。”

With bustling shops and a fair number of pricey cars on its roads, Tianzhen's county town does not, by Chinese standards, feel impoverished. There is little disclosure about how subsidies are used, says a restaurant owner. "We are told a lot of it goes into the local credit union and that we can apply for loans there, but they only lend to people with good connections."

按照中国的标准来看，拥有熙熙攘攘的商铺和路上为数不少的昂贵汽车的天镇县不能算得上是贫困。一间餐馆的老板说，这些补贴的用途很少为人所知。他说：“他们说这笔钱的大部分都到了当地信用合作社，我们可以从那里申请贷款，但是实际上只有那些有关系的人才能借到钱。”

In 2012, when the list was last updated, Xinshao county in Hunan in south-central China was added. Local officials used the county's official website to trumpet this "exceptional good tidings" after two years of "arduous efforts" and "untold hardships". A large roadside board added its "ardent congratulations". After nationwide criticism, the officials accepted that their words had been badly chosen. But their cheer was understandable: the official designation was worth an extra 560m yuan for the county each year from the central government.

2012年的最新名单包括了位于湖南（中国中南部省份）的新邵县。当地政府在县政府的官方网站上庆祝这个经过两年的“不懈的努力”和“难以估量的艰辛”而得来的“天大喜讯”。路边也打出“热烈祝贺”的大横幅。但在全国的批评指责下，当地官员承认他们措辞不当。但是他们的欢欣雀跃确实是人之常情：这个名额意味着县政府将每年从中央政府收到下拨的一笔高达5.6亿元人民币的补助。

The episode caused many to question the value of the system and the perverse incentives it creates for local governments. A commentary last year in the Legal Daily claimed that many places were misusing the funds and had fudged their figures to qualify as impoverished. Officials from the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development, which manages the list, have acknowledged widespread abuses. In February it banned lavish new buildings and "image projects" in officially designated poor areas.

这件事引起了许多人质疑这个制度的价值和它带给各地政府错误的激励。去年《法制日报》的一篇评论中指出，许多地方滥用资金并伪造数据来达到贫困的标准。负责拟定名单的国务院扶贫开发领导小组办公室官员早已知道普遍的资金滥用问题。此办公室在二月份叫停了贫困地区的豪华楼宇以及“形象工程”建设。

State television reported on two counties, one in Ningxia and one in Hubei, where local

governments spent 100m yuan each on new headquarters. In March, during China's annual full legislative session, the council's poverty head, Liu Yongfu, raised a different question about the programme. He told the Southern Metropolis, a newspaper, that hundreds of counties would be taken off the list by 2020. "If a poor area as big as a county still exists, then can Chinese society still be called moderately prosperous?" he asked.

据国家电视台报道，两个县政府（一个在宁夏自治区一个在湖北省）花费了1亿人民币，建设新的县政府总部。在三月召开的一年一度的全国人民代表大会中，国务院扶贫办主任刘永富对于扶贫项目提出了一个不同寻常的问题。他向《南方都市报》报的记者表示，在2020年前，将有上百个县城从扶贫名单中删除。他说：“如果像县城那么大的贫困地区仍然存在，中国谈何全面小康？”

Attainment of a "moderately prosperous society" is a goal that previous Chinese leaders set and that Xi Jinping, the current president, has adopted as well. Much progress has been made since reforms began in earnest in the late 1970s. China claims to have lifted 620m people out of poverty since then. Others may quibble over that number—the World Bank puts it at 500m—but few question the premise that China deserves immense credit for alleviating so much poverty.

“全面建设小康社会”是前一任中国领导人定下的目标，现任领导习近平也沿袭了这个目标。自20世纪70年代末期改革正式开始以来，中国已经取得了卓越的成就。根据官方数据显示，中国已有6.2亿人脱离贫困。有些人对这个数字表示怀疑--世界银行认为这个数字只有5亿，但几乎没有人会否认中国减轻贫困的卓越成就，这个成绩值得称赞。

Much still remains, however. A little uphill from Dingjiayan sits a smaller village, Dingyuanyao. Its higher elevation means it gets less water, and a resident says most of its 90 residents will clear just 1,000 yuan a year after paying for seeds and fertiliser. Some own motorbikes and televisions, and they are grateful for the basic health insurance they receive. They laugh in unison when asked if they receive subsidies. The arrival of electricity 30 years ago was a vast improvement, they agree. But little has changed in their lives since then.

当然，贫困还是存在的。从丁家烟往山上走，还有一个规模更小的叫丁原窑的村庄。它的高海拔造成了供水的困难。其中一个村民说，村子里90位村民中大部分在买了种子和肥料后就只剩下1000元了。有些村民家里有摩托车和电视机，而且他们很感激他们可以得到基本的医疗保险。当被问到有没有收到补贴时，他们都如出一辙地笑了起来。他们一致认为，30年前村子里通了电对他们的生活来说是很大的改善。但自从那时候起他们的生活几乎没有发生多大的变化。