

Innovation in China's Public Sector for Good Governance

The Challenge

Over the past decades, the Government of China has embarked on important reforms of the public sectors to clarify the role of the state, improve the performance of civil services, and institutionalise management and accountability structures in order to improve the service to the public. Incremental improvements have been achieved in recent years, but more comprehensive changes to the systems and structures of the public sector are needed. Key challenges are to raise efficiency, accountability and transparency, and to improve administrative mechanisms and governmental management.

The Chinese government's aim of reaching "Xiaokang", an all-around well-off society by 2020, bears witness to the strong political commitment to shift the focus of development from that of economic and material well-being to a broader vision of sustainable human development. Furthermore, the need to overcome disparities in service delivery is highlighted in the context of the construction of a Harmonious Society and a New Socialist Countryside. The need for greater transparency, integrity and efficiency in government and the public sector is therefore recognized by the Chinese government as a priority of reform and innovation.

The Response

Making governance and public administration more responsive to the needs to citizens and enhancing the State's capacity to carry out changing roles and functions in service delivery is key to the achievement of sustainable human development. This project supports China's leading government organization for public sector reform, the State Commission Office for Public Sector Reform (SCOPSR), in developing comprehensive strategies for public sector reform in line with the concepts of good governance. The project focuses on five priority areas: 1) People-centered government; 2) Efficient and accountable governmental structures; 3) Capacity building for good governance; 4) Responsive local government; and 5) Operationalising Public Service Unit (PSU) reform. By creating a space for international dialogue on best practices in public sector reform, this project will foster an understanding of the importance of successful public service reform in keeping with concepts of good governance and efficient service delivery.

Achievements

This project continues UNDP's support since 1991 to SCOPSR's reform efforts. Through research, seminars and international exposure, the UNDP-SCOPSR cooperation has led to concrete reform agendas on, for example, government restructuring to adapt to a market system, administrative alignment with WTO requirements, and readjusting government functions in China's Western regions. Over the next five years, this project will assist SCOPSR in providing policy recommendations to the Chinese leadership on the role of the state and other actors in the delivery and regulation of public services, accountability mechanisms for service provision, improved responsiveness, accountability and citizen involvement in local government, and operational plans for PSU reform. Furthermore, the project will pilot reform initiatives at local levels, contribute to an increased understanding and consensus among key government staff of internationally recognised concepts of good governance and sound public sector management, and strengthen officials' ability to incorporate this into public sector reform initiatives.

At A Glance

Start Date: July 2007

End Date: December 2011

Implementing Partner(s): China International Center for Economic and Technical Exchanges (CICETE)

Project ID: 00056242

UNDAF Goal: Social and economic policies are developed and improved to be more scientifically-based and human-centered for sustainable and equitable growth.

CPAP output: 4.2: Transparency and accountability within the civil service increased to promote effective delivery of services.

Total Budget:	US\$	1,740,000
UNDP:	US\$	1,000,000
Government (SCOPSR):	US\$	740,000

Project locations: Beijing, Guizhou, Ningxia, Qinghai, Shanxi, Hubei, Anhui, Jilin, Chongqing, Gansu, Xiangfan Guangdong, Jiangsu, and Hubei.

To contribute to this initiative, or to find out more about the programme, please visit our website or contact Ms Merethe Borge, Programme Manager, at (86-10) 8532 0764 or merethe.borge@undp.org

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