

Poverty Alleviation: The Mission of Education

Editorial Office of *Science Insights Education Frontiers*

AT the United Nations (UN) General Assembly held in September 2000, all 191 member states unanimously adopted an action plan aimed at reducing the global poverty level by half by 2015 (using the 1990 level as a reference). The action plan promised to reduce the proportions of the world's population with a daily income of less than one US dollar and those who suffer from hunger by half by the end of 2015, and to reduce the proportion of people who cannot obtain or afford safe drinking water by the same date. It aimed to ensure that by the same date, children from all over the world, regardless of gender, can complete all elementary school courses, and that boys and girls have equal opportunities to receive all levels of education. The action plan also promised to spare no effort to help more than one billion men, women and children around the world get rid of the miserable and indignant state of extreme poverty, and eventually realize the right of individual development, so that all mankind can avoid the situation of lacking.

After 40 years of reform and opening-up, China has successfully embarked on a special poverty alleviation path, successfully lifting more than 700 million rural poor people out of poverty, and laying a solid foundation for the overall development of society. China has become the country with the largest poverty reduction population in the world and the first country in the world to complete the UN Millennium Development Goals. China's achievements in poverty alleviation are valued by the United Nations and developing countries, and they hope to learn about China's experience. China's poverty alleviation experience includes "five parts", the first is the development of production; the second is relocation; the third is ecological compensation; the fourth is the development of education; the fifth is social security. Among them, the experience of developing education for poverty alleviation is the most important, because to cure poverty, we must first cure ignorance, and poverty alleviation must first support intelligence. China's education funding continues to tilt toward poverty-stricken areas, basic education, and vocational education to help poor areas improve school-running conditions and provide special care for children from poor rural families, especially the left-behind children.

The experience of "developing education to alleviate poverty" is also called "poverty alleviation by supporting education". The implementation of education for poverty alleviation is to fundamentally solve the poverty problem in poor areas. Those poor people are poor because they lack basic litera-

cy and calculation skills, let alone modern science and technology. Education is precisely to enable the educated to master the ability of reading, writing, and arithmetic, and to enable the educated to use modern technology to transform into productive forces. Education not only lifts the poor out of poverty, but also completely cuts off the poverty chain between generations, thus realizing the transition from “blood transfusion” to “blood-making”. It is exactly because of the importance of education to get rid of poverty, and thus many educational scholars pay close attention to the education poverty alleviation policy of their country, study its practice and analyze its effectiveness.

2020 is a year of a decisive victory in China’s fight against poverty. To let the world understand China’s practice and experience in education poverty alleviation, we specially invited Chinese educational scholars to write papers and introduce their experiences from various aspects. This issue includes both a retrospective study of the history of poverty alleviation through education, a summary of the research results of poverty alleviation through education, and a narrative study of girls’ education and poverty alleviation in impoverished areas in western China. We hope that the topic of “Poverty Alleviation by Supporting Education” can attract the attention of scholars from all countries around the world and actively participate in the discussion of this topic. We also sincerely hope that all countries in the world can get out of poverty as soon as possible.

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