



China

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FORD FOUNDATION

*Working with Visionaries on the
Frontlines of Social Change Worldwide*

The *Ford Foundation* works with visionary leaders and organizations worldwide to build responsive social structures and institutions so that all people have the opportunity to reach their full potential, contribute to society, have a voice in the decisions that affect them, and live and work in dignity.

This commitment to social justice is carried out through programs that strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty and injustice, promote international cooperation, and advance human knowledge, creativity and achievement.



As China experiences unprecedented growth and possibilities, the country also confronts many new social challenges. For more than 30 years, the Ford Foundation has supported institutions and individuals who are working to build a society that is not only more robust, but also more inclusive and equitable.

Promising trends show that people throughout the country are being given opportunities to share in China's extraordinary growth.



A NEW GENERATION OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Thirty years ago, China began a national program of “Reform and Opening,” an astonishing experiment in social change. After years of rapid economic growth, in 2010 China surpassed Japan to become the world’s second-largest economy behind that of the United States. China was already exporting more goods than any other country: Roughly half of all computers, televisions and mobile phones are made in China. The country also produces more than one-third of the world’s crude steel, two-fifths of all cement, and many other materials and components used to manufacture consumer products.

China has also made exceptional progress in reducing large-scale poverty. In 1980, 70 percent of the Chinese population lived on less than one dollar a day. By 2010 that share had dropped to 10 percent. Overall, hundreds of millions of people were lifted out of abject poverty, the greatest achievement of its kind in history.

But China’s economic miracle has not transformed life for everyone in the country. Despite extraordinary reductions in poverty, there are still more poor people living in China today than in any country other than India. Stark disparities in wealth, status and access to resources and opportunity mean that many people are not yet fully sharing in the growth they see around them. These include the rural poor, many of whom are ethnic minorities dependent

on scarce or degrading natural resources; internal migrants struggling to start new lives in China’s increasingly crowded and expensive cities; women who routinely face discrimination in the workplace; and girls who cannot shape their own futures because society values them less than boys.

Recognizing the many challenges facing the country today, the national government is seeking to balance continued economic growth with greater investment in China’s society and people.

FORD’S HISTORY IN CHINA

The Ford Foundation has a rich history in China, and we are building on that experience to further our work today.

In 1979, the government of China invited the foundation to help advance China’s agenda of “Reform and Opening” by facilitating international cooperation in the social sciences. A year later, we made our first grant in China. In 1988 we opened an office in Beijing.

Over the past three decades, the foundation has made grants in China totaling more than \$275 million. The results of these investments are evident in many areas of life. Our support helped to rebuild China’s universities, strengthening core academic fields that had been neglected from the mid-1960s to ’70s during the Cultural Revolution. We worked with our partners in China to propel a paradigm shift in family planning, away from an exclusive focus on population

control and toward policies that educate individuals to make informed choices. We also supported programs that reduced rural poverty and demonstrated the power of involving communities in developing and testing new approaches to long-standing problems.

These are just three of many examples over the years. The foundation continues to operate in China through its Beijing office as a guest of the Chinese government, helping to improve lives throughout the nation.

WHAT FORD IS DOING

The foundation—and the organizations with which we work in China—believes a strong social sector is essential to fighting poverty, reducing inequality and creating opportunities for disadvantaged individuals and communities to improve their well-being and contribute to the common good. We have focused our work in China on helping the government realize its reform priorities and develop the tremendous capacity of China’s society to be a catalyst for social change.

To that end, we’re helping to foster an environment that is conducive to the creation and growth of highly effective community service organizations and indigenous philanthropic institutions. And we’re supporting system-wide improvements in government services, with a focus on transparency and accountability and on giving citizens a greater voice in

discussions about public policies, especially at the local level.

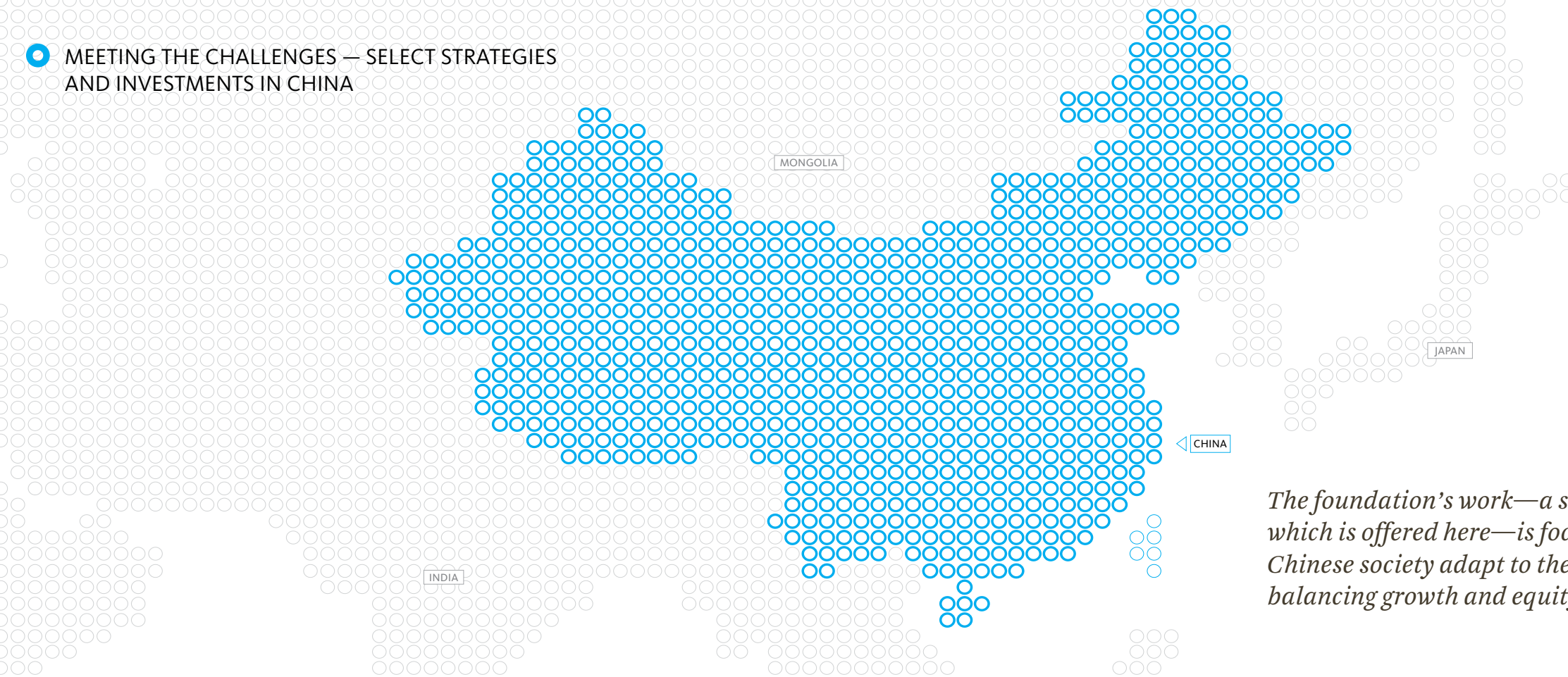
To support these two broad initiatives, we fund social development activities that address the unique needs of communities. We make grants that help remote rural communities use surrounding lands in ways that improve people’s livelihoods, maintain vibrant local cultures and sustain their resources for decades to come. We fund the expansion of legal services for the poor and related justice system reforms because equal access to justice is a powerful measure of equality in society. We support innovations in secondary and higher education that give young people from disadvantaged backgrounds a real chance to succeed in school and throughout life. And we invest in creative programs that educate youth about sexuality and reproductive health in ways that break down the persistent cultural bias against women and girls.

In each of these areas, our grants aim to support synergistic partnerships among government, researchers, a growing number of energetic and creative nonprofit organizations, and ordinary citizens.

A PROMISING FUTURE

We see the beginnings of a new generation of social change in China, one that promises to extend prosperity to many more people, now and for generations to come.

MEETING THE CHALLENGES — SELECT STRATEGIES AND INVESTMENTS IN CHINA



The foundation's work—a small sampling of which is offered here—is focused on helping Chinese society adapt to the challenges of balancing growth and equity.

CIVIL SOCIETY

NATIONWIDE
Nurturing nonprofit start-ups and incubators, and providing professional development to social entrepreneurs.

ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNMENT

NATIONWIDE
Observing compliance with regulations requiring greater openness by all government agencies throughout China.

JUSTICE REFORM

NATIONWIDE
Developing university-based law clinics across the country and public interest law fellowships (Beijing, Wuhan, Harbin, Chongqing, and Ningxia and Jiangxi provinces) to expand legal services for the poor.

ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNMENT

BEIJING, SICHUAN, GUIZHOU, HUNAN, SHAANXI, GUANGXI, CHONGQING
Encouraging models of local governance that engage citizens in setting priorities and solving problems.

EDUCATION REFORM

BEIJING, ANHUI
Expanding vocational education as an alternative to traditional academic high schools.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

SICHUAN, QINGHAI, INNER MONGOLIA, GANSU
Working with ethnic herder communities to improve grassland management.

INNER MANGOLIA, SICHUAN, YUNNAN
Joining upland farmers and herders together in powerful cooperatives that improve livelihoods and protect the land.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

HEILONGJIANG, LIAONING, JIANGXI, YUNNAN, BEIJING, GUANGDONG
Empowering young people to help design and develop sexuality and reproductive health education initiatives.

EDUCATION ACCESS

SICHUAN, SHANDONG, ZHEJIANG
Improving educational performance and graduation rates among students attending private "Minban" universities in less developed areas of the country.

WORKING ON THE FRONTLINES IN

China



Strengthening Civil Society

GRANTEES ARE BUILDING an effective nonprofit sector, working with government and local philanthropy to solve China's most pressing social problems.

Many government officials believe that the challenges China faces are too massive for government to solve alone. Thirty years ago, for example, 80 percent of the population lived in the countryside. Today, nearly half of China's 1.35 billion people reside in cities. Municipal governments are struggling just to meet basic needs and are eager to partner with community service organizations and networks.

A young Chinese business school graduate is helping local governments address these challenges. In 2007, he created an incubator for nonprofit service providers in China's big cities. With funding from the Ford Foundation, he held an open competition in Shanghai. About 100 nonprofit start-ups applied, and six were selected for incubating the first year. His organization has since opened branches in other cities and hatched more than 30 nonprofits that deliver a wide array of services—from providing students with select courses of study to making preventive healthcare available to the poor—in partnership with local government.

At Ford, we're committed to strengthening the nonprofit sector in China so that it can play an effective role in social development. We do this in part by making grants to organizations working on the issues explored in this brochure. Equally important, we invest in the sector overall.

When the earthquake hit Sichuan Province in 2008, Chinese community service organizations, some of them brand new, proved they could mobilize resources at a moment's notice. Yet many lacked the capacity and infrastructure to coordinate effectively and be held accountable for the money and responsibility that were entrusted to them. Our grantees are helping nonprofits become more professional and effective, and they're leading efforts to create a regulatory framework in China in which nonprofits can flourish and excel.

We also fund projects that encourage the development of indigenous philanthropy and link local funders and service organizations in common purpose. And perhaps most important, our grantees are building public trust in a new breed of organizations on the frontlines of social change in China.

ON THE FRONTLINES

Our grantees are strengthening the nonprofit sector in China. Their work includes:

Providing professional development to social entrepreneurs through a new institute and publishing Social Entrepreneur magazine.

Producing a manual of good practices to guide partnerships between government and the nonprofit sector.

Building the capacity of Chinese philanthropy through the China Foundation Center.

Researching model laws and regulations governing nonprofit organizations in China as a step toward creating a regulatory framework.

Communicating the latest news, developments and challenges surrounding the nonprofit sector through the Chinese language "China Development Brief."

For a full list of grantees, go to fordfoundation.org



A STRONG NONPROFIT SECTOR CAN PLAY AN EFFECTIVE ROLE IN SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

NEW REGULATIONS ARE INCREASING THE FLOW OF GOVERNMENT INFORMATION TO POOR AND VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES.



○ DEMOCRATIC AND ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNMENT

Promoting Transparent, Effective and Accountable Government

WITH GOVERNMENT OPENNESS, grantees are better able to engage vulnerable groups to work with government to solve the problems facing their communities.

In April 2007, a historic action demonstrated China's commitment to becoming more transparent, service-oriented, accountable and open to participatory models of governing that engage community organizations and citizens in setting local priorities. China's State Council passed a much-anticipated regulation intended to replace what had long been characterized as a closed system with a more open government at all levels.

Officially known as "The Open Government Information Regulations," it took effect one year later and requires all government bodies and departments to publish, without delay, information that either affects the "vital interests" of individuals or groups, or that should be widely known and discussed. It also gives citizens the right to request information that the government has not released.

Though written decrees don't guarantee immediate or full compliance, the regulations have been transformative. The newly transparent system gives the public the right to access accounts of government spending, to learn about land acquisitions and to know the results of investigations related to food safety and environmental hazards; These are just a few types of information that fall under the regulation. In addition, many government officials are urgently concerned about the growing gap between rich and poor and are calling for reforms to build a more equitable society.

The organizations we support are working to ensure that the increased flow of information reaches poor, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and that their voices are heard when it comes time to discuss policies affecting their lives and livelihoods.

The work is challenging, and progress can be slow. Findings from "China Government Transparency Watch Report 2009," published by one of our grantees, show that more than half of provincial-level governments that year fell short of meeting the government's standards for information openness. At the same time, our projects show that many local governments are working hard to improve their transparency and to increase input from all citizens.

ON THE FRONTLINES

Our grantees use a variety of approaches to join government and people in common purpose. Their work includes:

Observing government agency compliance with national regulations requiring greater openness and helping communities benefit from this information.

Encouraging public participation in urban grassroots governance.

Tapping the potential of women village officials to promote transparency and accountability.

Developing accessible, easily managed village government websites to improve transparency and accountability.

For a full list of grantees, go to fordfoundation.org

Reforming Civil and Criminal Justice Systems

THE WORK OF GRANTEES is strengthening China's legal system, and in some cases, opening the courthouse doors to poor and marginalized groups.

In the three decades since China launched its "Reform and Opening" policies, the country has made remarkable progress toward its goal of establishing a society that operates under the rule of law. Every year, the National People's Congress and the State Council enact hundreds of new laws, and courts, prosecutors and administrative agencies promulgate even more rules and regulations. The impact of these laws and policies ranges from setting legal limits on China's bustling commercial activity to establishing rights for individual victims of industrial pollution.

The Ford Foundation supports organizations, both within and outside of government, that are working to strengthen the rule of law and develop programs and services that increase access to justice for all people.

The need for such programs and services is substantial: With China's population of 1.3 billion people struggling to keep pace with one of the greatest economic and social transitions in human history, it is inevitable that disputes will arise among citizens, necessitating the services of well-trained lawyers. Despite China's impressive efforts and progress in this area, the country has only about 150,000 lawyers, and most of them are concentrated in just a few big cities. More than 200 of China's 2,700 counties have no lawyers at all. Roughly 80 percent of criminal defendants in China are not represented by counsel.

Our grantees are creating and testing innovative ways to meet these needs, with a focus on providing legal services to poor and vulnerable populations. Their work includes university-based legal clinics, public interest law organizations and government legal aid offices. In addition to supporting these innovative services, we fund related research and foster international exchanges with individuals and organizations engaged in improving justice systems in their home countries.

ON THE FRONTLINES

Our grantees are expanding the field of public interest law. Their work includes:

Developing legal programs and fellowships.

Training Chinese criminal justice scholars in how to use empirical research and demonstration projects.

Increasing knowledge of gender issues within the legal profession.

Researching the availability and effectiveness of legal services in rural China.

Studying the use of citizen judges alongside professional judges in criminal cases.

For a full list of grantees, go to fordfoundation.org



GRANTEES ARE DEVELOPING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES THAT INCREASE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL PEOPLE.



RECENTLY ESTABLISHED FARMING AND HERDING PRACTICES BENEFIT BOTH PEOPLE AND THE LAND.

Expanding Community Rights Over Natural Resources

GRANTEES ARE HELPING poor communities and ethnic minorities in China's rural west to manage their lands sustainably and, in the process, improve their livelihoods.

China's rapid industrialization and competing resource needs bring new challenges to the task of protecting vulnerable natural resources and creating opportunities in poor rural communities. Grasslands cover more than 40 percent of the country, for example, and nearly 90 percent of them are at least partially degraded. Desertification in the arid regions threatens the livelihoods of a staggering 400 million people. Restoring these lands and helping individuals and families find a way out of poverty isn't easy, but innovations in government, research groups and the nonprofit sector are able to lead the way.

For example, a provincial nonprofit organization is working in partnership with the national government to help herders develop village-wide agreements on how to heal degraded grasslands and manage government funds allocated for this purpose. The herders have agreed to decrease their livestock, plant vegetation and return to the seasonal practice of rotating their animals between pastures. The success of this experiment has inspired nonprofits in other provinces to start similar programs.

Tea farmers of ethnic minority origin and the tea trees they depend on for their livelihood are also vulnerable. We fund projects that help these farmers form cooperatives and use their collective voice to negotiate better prices for their tea, better protection for their lands and a greater role in decisions about local tourism development. The initial pilot project we funded has since spread to other western provinces.

Through these projects and others, we're learning that it is possible to establish farming and herding practices that benefit both the people and the land. Despite significant progress, obstacles remain, so we continue to support government and local communities in their search for models of sustainable rural development.

ON THE FRONTLINES

Our grantees are helping rural communities sustain their lands and forge fruitful land-management partnerships between communities and government. Their work includes:

Funding innovations that improve grassland management in poor, rural areas.

Exploring the impact of mining on grasslands and herding communities.

Engaging government authorities in workshops to strengthen community-based grassland management and herder cooperatives.

Fostering farmer cooperatives and rural tourism enterprises that can help protect natural resources.

Promoting public participation in programs to reduce rural poverty and protect natural resources in western China.

For a full list of grantees, go to fordfoundation.org

Transforming Secondary Education

OUR GRANTEES ARE FUELING a nationwide effort to reform secondary education so that finishing high school is something that all young people can achieve.

China has 300 million school-aged children, the largest number in the world, and nearly all children in grades 1-6 are enrolled in school. But enrollment rates begin to fall in middle school, a problem that is most serious in rural areas, despite the fact that education is compulsory and free through grade 9. The attrition continues in high school. While enrollment rates have doubled since 1995, more than 25 percent of all adolescents who could have been attending high school in 2009 were not enrolled.

Due to financial or academic problems, many teenagers opt out of high school altogether, a decision they often make during the transition from junior high. This is particularly common in China's western region, where minority ethnic communities and rural poverty are concentrated. It is also common in the cities, among migrant children who are restricted to special schools.

China's Ministry of Education has embarked on an ambitious plan to close the educational gap between rich and poor, beginning with a promise to commit 4 percent of GDP to education by 2012. But increasing funding and creating more schools are only part of the solution. Secondary education in China is in desperate need of innovation, and our grantees are leading the way in creating alternatives—from courses of study that engage youth who are likely to drop out to measures holding school leaders accountable for educational outcomes.

One of the organizations we support runs a tuition-free vocational school for teens aged 16 to 18, many of whom are children of migrant workers. Another grantee is testing the impact of starting the school day with a healthy breakfast. A third is partnering with government authorities in remote rural areas to improve the quality of classroom instruction. These change makers and the many others we support have demonstrated that secondary schools can become pathways to opportunity for young people from all backgrounds.

ON THE FRONTLINES

Our grantees take an array of approaches to transforming secondary schools. Their work includes:

Developing a national monitoring and evaluation system to promote educational equity.

Expanding vocational education.

Testing and expanding innovations to improve student performance in rural schools.

Studying the challenges affecting migrant students in private "Minban" and public schools.

For a full list of grantees, go to fordfoundation.org

NEW INNOVATIONS ARE ADDRESSING DROP-OUT RATES AND HOLDING EDUCATIONAL LEADERS ACCOUNTABLE.





HIGHER EDUCATION IMPROVEMENTS
MUST SUPPORT CHINA'S INCREASINGLY
DIVERSE STUDENT BODY, BOTH
ACADEMICALLY AND EMOTIONALLY.

Advancing Higher Education Access and Success

GRANTEES SUPPORT systemic reforms and innovations in higher education that help individuals from poor families do well in college and graduate better prepared for the future.

The number of university students in China grew from 6.8 million in 1999 to more than 23 million in 2009, transforming a university education from an elite experience to a popular one. Today, more than half of university students are the first members of their families to attend college. Families take great pride in this accomplishment, and so does the country, but many of these students and the schools they attend are struggling.

The quality of instruction is declining in all but the very best schools, which are less likely today than they were a decade ago to admit individuals from poor families. University debt is mounting, and roughly one-third of recent college graduates can't find jobs.

A large-scale research and demonstration project we funded revealed troubling deficits for university students who come from poor families. In a sample of students from 18 local universities in western China, only 8 percent achieved excellent grades; fewer than one in five participated in extracurricular activities; nearly one-third showed signs of clinical depression; and only 7 percent were optimistic about their future. But the same project also showed that at least some economically disadvantaged students performed and felt better when the school environment recognized their circumstances and supported them academically and emotionally. The project involved 50 universities in eight provinces and has already influenced many others.

The Ministry of Education plans to increase enrollment in postsecondary schools to roughly 35 million by 2020, but expanding higher education will not pay off for the country or for individuals unless schools can meet the needs of an increasingly large and diverse student body. Our grantees are working to develop excellence throughout the system—from rural universities, community colleges and village learning centers, to private “Minban” campuses and vocational schools in China’s big cities—so that young people who endeavor to advance their education are rewarded with knowledge and skills that empower them and are valued by society.

ON THE FRONTLINES

Our grantees are improving higher education to meet the demands of a growing and increasingly diverse student body. Their work includes:

Helping poor and disadvantaged students at universities in western China adjust successfully to college life.

Implementing a data-driven management tool to track and improve the quality of instruction and postgraduate employment rates.

Exploring how industrial colleges can work with local enterprises to design educational programs suited to local labor markets and communities.

Improving educational performance and graduation rates at private “Minban” universities in some of the country’s less developed regions.

Developing a learning center to help local community colleges develop curricula and teaching materials suited to the needs of rural communities.

For a full list of grantees, go to fordfoundation.org

Sexuality and Reproductive Health Education

GRANTEES ARE EQUIPPING China's youth with the knowledge and life skills they need to make wise decisions about intimate relationships, and to help build a society that values men and women equally.

Groundbreaking ideas sometimes take shape in unexpected places. A primary school for migrant children in Beijing is on the leading edge of developing a new approach to sexuality education. In the pilot program, which operates with support from the district government and funding from the Ford Foundation, children in first grade learn that it is good to make friends with a diverse group of people in terms of gender and ethnicity, and to appreciate, respect and support one other.

By the time children are 10 years old and in their fourth year of primary school, they begin to ask basic questions about gender and sexuality and are ready to explore where they can find answers. This kind of teaching and guidance—looking critically at media images and discussing the right to be free from sexual abuse and harassment and to participate in decision making about their own lives—is hugely important in China. More and more adolescents are becoming involved in romantic and sexual relationships despite warnings from their parents and society about “premature love.” Most teenagers—eight out of 10—rely primarily on mass media and the Internet for information about sexuality and reproductive health. Without scientifically accurate information and the skills to navigate intimate relationships, young people are at risk of sexually transmitted diseases, unplanned pregnancies and dating violence. Recognizing these dangers, the national government has endorsed the development of sexuality education courses in schools throughout the country.

Our grant making is designed to deepen the government's efforts, to build the capacity of nonprofit organizations to play a significant role in developing 21st-century sexuality education programs and to promote gender equality. China's deep-seated gender bias is reflected in a continued preference for male babies and a host of social norms that pressure women and men into stereotypical roles. In addition, our grants focus on ensuring that high-quality, comprehensive sexuality education reaches everyone, including those who are poor and disadvantaged.

ON THE FRONTLINES

Our grantees are engaged in a wide array of efforts to develop and promote sexuality education. Their work includes:

Delivering sexuality education that educates and empowers primary school students.

Conducting research on young people's knowledge, attitudes and behaviors.

Developing trainings on gender, sexuality and HIV/AIDS for policy makers and practitioners.

Empowering young and marginalized people to help develop sexuality and reproductive health and education initiatives.

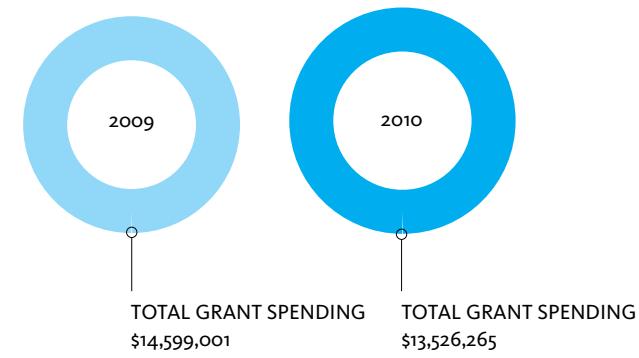
Working through a national network of family planning centers to reach young people in less developed areas.

For a full list of grantees, go to fordfoundation.org

WITHOUT CLEAR AND ACCURATE INFORMATION, CHINA'S YOUNG PEOPLE ARE EXPOSED TO THREATS FROM DISEASE AND DATING VIOLENCE.



ISSUES, INITIATIVES AND GRANT SPENDING IN CHINA



ISSUE	INITIATIVE
Democratic and Accountable Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Strengthening Civil Society</i> • <i>Promoting Transparent, Effective and Accountable Government</i>
Human Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reforming Civil and Criminal Justice Systems</i>
Sustainable Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Expanding Community Rights Over Natural Resources</i>
Educational Opportunity and Scholarship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Transforming Secondary Education</i> • <i>Advancing Higher Education Access and Success</i>
Sexuality and Reproductive Health and Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sexuality and Reproductive Health Education</i>



TO LEARN MORE about the Ford Foundation and our grant making, visit fordfoundation.org

TO APPLY FOR A GRANT, visit fordfoundation.org/grants/grant-inquiry/china where you will find a Grant Application Guide that describes our process and an online form you may use to submit a grant inquiry.

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