

## Research on the situation of returning to poverty and governance measures in poverty-alleviated areas in China: A case study of Linxia Hui autonomous prefecture in Gansu Province, China

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**Abstract:** Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, under the strong leadership of the Party Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core, China's poverty reduction efforts have achieved historic success, with absolute poverty completely eradicated by 2020. However, the long-standing issue of returning to poverty has occasionally occurred, manifesting at different times and in various regions. This study aims to explore the phenomenon of returning to poverty in rural areas under the context of China's targeted poverty alleviation and its governance measures. Based on this, Linxia Hui Autonomous Prefecture in Gansu Province, China (hereinafter referred to as "Linxia Prefecture") is selected as the research area. Through a combination of data analysis and field interviews, the study examines the situation and historical trends of returning to poverty in Linxia Prefecture in recent years, ultimately summarizing the current measures to prevent and control returning to poverty in the region. The results indicate that the phenomenon of returning to poverty in Linxia Prefecture exhibits significant annual and regional differences at the county and township levels, with diverse causes and changing primary factors of returning to poverty. At the household level, low education levels, a small number of labor force, low quality of labor, and poor overall health of households are the main internal factors contributing to the return to poverty among those who have previously been lifted out of poverty.

**Keywords:** Governance, Risk perception, Returning to poverty, Targeted poverty alleviation.

### 1. Introduction

With the joint efforts of the entire party and the people of all ethnic groups in China, the country has won the largest battle against poverty in human history (Wang and Ding, 2021). Although the arduous task of eliminating absolute poverty has been accomplished, the instability of poverty alleviation quality and other factors pose a risk of returning to poverty for those who have been lifted out of poverty (Liu et al., 2017). This seriously hinders the effective connection between poverty alleviation and rural revitalization in China (Guo and Liu, 2021).

The scale of returning to poverty has a dialectical relationship between the whole and its parts. Regional poverty recurrence differs from scattered individual poverty recurrence, simultaneously manifesting as a collective and large-scale welfare deficit. The accumulation of individual poverty recurrence forms the totality of collective poverty recurrence, and the collective and large-scale nature of poverty recurrence also serves as the primary factor for the emergence of individual poverty recurrence. Therefore, understanding the occurrence of poverty recurrence in a specific region requires statistical and data analysis at the macro levels such as counties and townships to understand its general characteristics and representations. This is necessary for general explanations, cause analysis, and universal countermeasures for the region. It is also essential to conduct precise analysis at the micro levels of families and individuals to implement targeted measures effectively, truly achieving the goal

of “filling in what is missing and helping where it is lacking,” ultimately stabilizing the poverty alleviation of returning households (Davie et al., 2021). According to the 2021 list of national and provincial key assistance counties for rural revitalization in Gansu Province, the key national assistance counties in Linxia Hui Autonomous Prefecture include Dongxiang Autonomous County, Jishishan Bonan, Dongxiang, and Salar Autonomous County, and Yongjing County. The provincial key assistance counties include Linxia County. According to relevant officials from Linxia Prefecture, approximately 37,400 and 39,100 people were included in the dynamic monitoring for preventing poverty recurrence in 2019 and 2020, respectively.

Considering that the “targeted poverty alleviation” policy was first proposed in November 2013 and officially implemented in 2014 (Zhou et al., 2018), this paper sets the timeframe for the poverty recurrence data starting from 2015. Additionally, since 2020 was a crucial year for the comprehensive establishment of a moderately prosperous society and poverty alleviation, with all poverty-stricken counties completing their poverty alleviation tasks and the dynamic clearing of poverty populations in that year, the data on poverty recurrence is limited to the end of 2019. Therefore, for the historical performance of poverty recurrence in Linxia Prefecture, we will focus on the period from 2015 to 2019.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Research on the Connotation of Returning to Poverty

The phenomenon of returning to poverty refers to people who had been lifted out of poverty falling back into a state of poverty. This specific form of poverty increases the overall number of rural poor and brings new challenges to rural poverty alleviation efforts (Wang et al., 2024). Returning to poverty can be regarded as a typical form of long-term poverty by exploring the subject, object, and scale of poverty recurrence from both macro and micro perspectives (Carter and Barrett, 2006). Mellor (2017) believed that true poverty alleviation involves enhancing farmers’ ideologies and abilities, and stabilizing their income and income channels, rather than relying solely on external assistance. asserting that returning to poverty refers to individuals who have been lifted out of poverty through development assistance but fall back into poverty due to factors such as natural disasters, major illnesses, business risks, or environmental deterioration, leading to unstable poverty alleviation. Wang et al. (2023) analyzed the dynamic evolution of multidimensional return to poverty in Chinese rural households based on the China family panel studies during an eight-year period.

### 2.2. Research on the Inducing Factors of Returning to Poverty

Jazairy et al. (1992) pointed out that natural disasters, rising prices, and excessive births are the main causes of returning to poverty, with natural disasters and rising prices accounting for majority of the causes. Natural disasters, due to their suddenness and destructiveness, are the primary triggers of large-scale poverty recurrence, while rising prices, with their gradual and concealed nature, have a more hidden impact on returning to poverty. Jie et al. (2020) highlighted that Qinghai Province experiences severe poverty recurrence due to fragile natural ecology, a low starting point for economic development, and high vulnerability to poverty. The main causes include harsh natural conditions, insufficient land resource management, difficulties in increasing income, lack of public resources, and risks of returning to poverty due to diseases and large expenditures. Deng et al. (2022) studied the impact of industrial development, insufficient market demand judgment, and lack of monitoring and evaluation of poverty alleviation policies on the re-poverty of populations from the perspective of social risks. These studies collectively reveal the complexity and multi-dimensionality of the phenomenon of returning to poverty in the Lankao County of China. Wang et al. (2024) pointed out that the frequent occurrence of returning to poverty mainly stems from the high vulnerability of the poor and their marginal groups. These populations find it difficult to withstand various risks, and even slight policy changes can plunge them back into poverty. Zhang et al. (2022) analyzed the data of registered poor households from Hubei provinces, finding that household size and labor force quantity are key factors determining whether a family faces the risk of returning to poverty.

### 2.3. Research on Governance Countermeasures for Returning to Poverty

Improving medical conditions and establishing a comprehensive medical service system are crucial for enhancing people's health levels (Organization, 2000; Kruk et al., 2018). Various incentive measures should be implemented to encourage farmers to participate in vocational training, increasing their employment opportunities and thereby boosting agricultural development and farmers' incomes. There is the need to enhance rural laborers' capacity for wealth creation, adjust their psychology to adapt to the modern economy, establish new values, reshape self-worth, and strengthen new civic education to improve their ability to cope with risks and reduce their chances of falling back into poverty (Tropp, 2021). To effectively govern and prevent the phenomenon of returning to poverty, a dynamic national poverty line adjustment mechanism and a reasonable policy connection mechanism should be established (Ruja et al., 2024). Furthermore, the ecological compensation mechanism should be improved (Wan et al., 2022), and rural education, healthcare, and elderly care systems should be strengthened to enhance the self-development capabilities of the poor and leverage the role of new community leaders in promoting community development. The social security system should become the foundational system for a long-term poverty alleviation mechanism (Romig, 2022). A "dual" social security system should be constructed according to the urban-rural dual structure to determine supply levels (Pan and Pan, 2017). Ge et al. (2023) suggested consolidating poverty alleviation achievements through the improvement of market-based employment poverty alleviation mechanisms, the promotion of market-based commercial insurance assistance mechanisms, and the exploration of market-based village agglomeration mechanisms to ensure high-quality and sustainable poverty alleviation (Ruben, 2024).

## 3. Historical Situation of Returning to Poverty in Linxia Hui Autonomous Prefecture

Linxia Hui Autonomous Prefecture, located in Gansu Province, China, has experienced notable instances of poverty recurrence despite efforts in poverty alleviation. Understanding the historical patterns of returning to poverty in this region requires examining both macro and micro factors that contribute to this phenomenon (Zhang and Feng, 2024).

### 3.1. County and Township Levels

Based on the results of the research survey, the data on the population returning to poverty in various counties and cities of Linxia Prefecture from 2015 to 2019 are summarized in Table 1. The analysis reveals the following characteristics: <sup>1</sup>

**Table 1.**  
Population returning to poverty in Linxia prefecture by county/City (2015–2019).

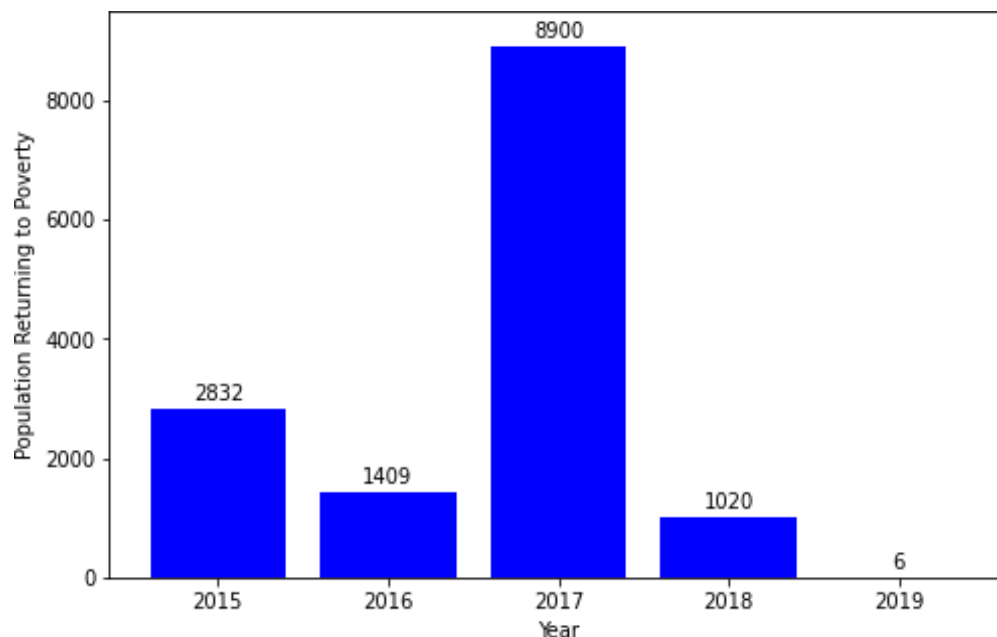
County/City	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Linxia prefecture total	2832	1409	8900	1020	6
Jishishan county	2364	30	939	21	0
Yongjing county	113	138	2887	3	0
Linxia county	0	98	1827	240	0
Dongxiang county	110	143	1455	133	0
Kangle county	234	67	949	116	0
Linxia city	11	866	13	31	0
Guanghe county	0	37	721	57	0
Hezheng county	0	30	109	419	6

The data on the population returning to poverty shows significant annual variability. From a comprehensive perspective of Linxia Prefecture, 2017 stands out as the year with the highest concentration of newly identified poverty recurrence, reaching a total of 8,900 people. A detailed observation of the annual data for each county and city reveals a similar trend in five counties, excluding Jishishan County, Hezheng County, and Linxia City. This trend started in 2015, peaked in 2017, and then rapidly declined in the subsequent years, as shown in Figure 1.

This phenomenon highlights the complex interplay of poverty and poverty recurrence issues in

Linxia Prefecture at that time, reflecting the severity of deep poverty and the instability of poverty alleviation outcomes. Therefore, focusing on preventing the risk of poverty recurrence and establishing a stable poverty alleviation mechanism is of critical historical and practical significance for Linxia Prefecture. It is particularly noteworthy that this segment of the population returning to poverty largely consists of those on the margins of poverty alleviation, with relatively low

<sup>1</sup>Data source: Compiled based on data provided by Linxia Prefecture Rural Revitalization Bureau and the county/city Rural Revitalization Bureaus.



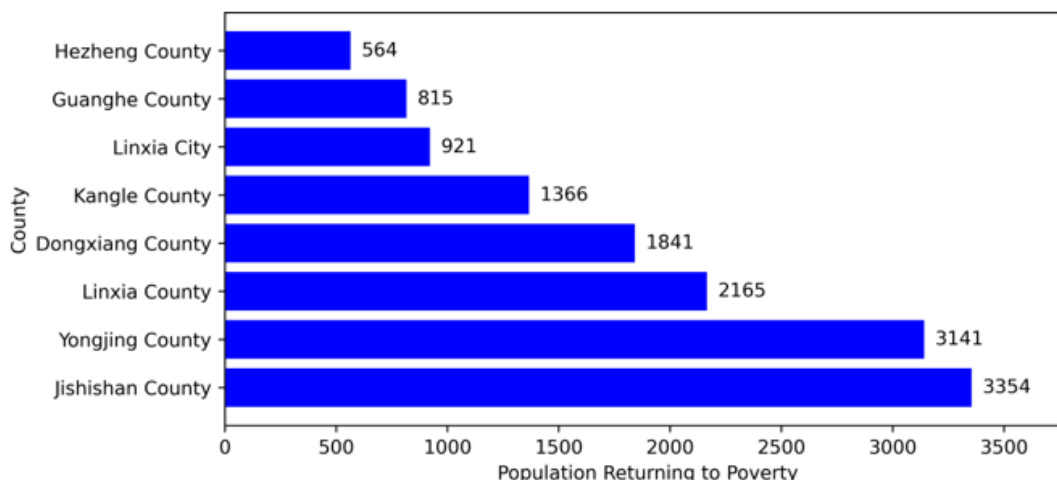
**Figure 1.** Newly identified population returning to poverty in Linxia prefecture (2015-2019).

Poverty alleviation standards. Conducting precise analysis and assessment of this group is indispensable for effectively identifying poverty recurrence risks and developing targeted prevention mechanisms.

Through in-depth interviews and investigations with poverty alleviation cadres in Linxia Prefecture, we learned that the significant increase in newly identified poor populations in 2017 was mainly due to adjustments in poverty identification policies. In 2017, the state first proposed the principle of "include all that should be included, assist all that should be assisted," clarifying new standards for including targeted poor households. This standard primarily covered non-registered agricultural households whose annual per capita net income in 2016 was below a specific threshold (equivalent to 2,300 yuan at constant 2010 prices) and who met certain conditions (such as living in dilapidated housing, poverty due to illness, or poverty due to education expenses). Additionally, households that had been lifted out of poverty but had not yet achieved "two no worries, three guarantees" were re-examined and marked as returning to poverty to ensure they continued to receive assistance. Therefore, based on this new standard, Linxia Prefecture conducted a reassessment of households, reclassifying those who had been lifted out of poverty under previous standards but did not meet the new standards as impoverished households.

There is considerable regional variability in the population returning to poverty. At the county level, between 2015 and 2019, the eight counties and cities under Linxia Prefecture displayed significant regional differences in the number of identified returning poor populations. Among them, Jishishan County had the most notable number of returning poor populations, reaching 3,354 people, making it the county with the highest number of returning poor populations during this period. Following

closely was Yongjing County, with 3,141 returning poor populations, ranking second. Linxia County ranked third, with 2,165 returning poor populations. In contrast, Hezheng County had the least number of returning poor populations, only 564 people, which is less than 17% of the number of returning poor populations in Jishishan County. Figure 2 visually reflects the different situations of returning to poverty across various counties and cities in Linxia Prefecture.



**Figure 2.**

Total identified population returning to poverty in counties and cities of Linxia prefecture (2015-2019).

The real causes of poverty recurrence are diverse. Based on data provided by the Prefecture Rural Revitalization Bureau, from 2015 to 2019, the total number of people returning to poverty in the entire prefecture reached 14,167, involving 3,876 households. Through cluster analysis, we found that the primary real causes of poverty recurrence appeared a total of 7,656 times among these 3,876 households. This indicates that each household facing poverty recurrence encounters at least two or more real causes on average. This data reveals that poverty recurrence is not caused by a single factor but is the result of multiple intersecting and diverse influences, highlighting the complexity and multifaceted nature of the issue. As shown in Table 2, this conclusion is strongly supported by the data.

**Table 2.**

Statistics of households returning to poverty due to different factors in Linxia prefecture.

Year	House holds	Total Causes	Lack of Funds	Lack of Technology	Lack of Labor	Lack of Land	Backward Transportation	Illness or Disability	Lack of Motivation
2015	608	1325	495	498	82	12	43	84	111
2016	358	723	228	211	56	3	12	189	24
2017	2650	4947	1274	1184	820	38	142	1179	310
2018	258	579	95	123	53	123	12	124	49
2019	2	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0

During our field visits, we observed that although some households that had returned to poverty had improved their living environment and transportation conditions through relocation for poverty alleviation, their livelihood capabilities had not significantly improved. These families generally lacked the necessary technical means to secure stable and continuous sources of income. Additionally, the sudden occurrence of major illnesses among family members further exacerbated their financial burdens, with household expenses surging dramatically. Due to the combined effects of illness and lack of technical skills, these families ultimately fell back into poverty.

### *3.2. Household and Individual Characteristics*

This section primarily provides a descriptive statistical analysis at the household level of families that have returned to poverty. For the sample selection, this study focuses on households in Dongxiang County, aiming to analyze demographic characteristics. Dongxiang County was chosen because, at the end of 2013, it had the highest poverty rate in Linxia Prefecture. It is often said that “the poverty alleviation success of Linxia Prefecture depends on Dongxiang;” highlighting the arduous and complex nature of its poverty alleviation tasks, making it a representative subject for research. For the choice of the year, we focused on 2017. According to records from the “National Poverty Alleviation Information System,” this year saw the highest number of newly identified individuals returning to poverty in Dongxiang County, with a total of 1,455 people. Additionally, the system recorded the highest number of households returning to poverty, totaling 384 households and 1,717 individuals. Therefore, conducting a statistical analysis of the data from 2017 provides the most accurate reflection of the actual situation of households returning to poverty in Dongxiang County.

A statistical analysis of the main characteristics of households that returned to poverty in Dongxiang County in 2017 was conducted, as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3.**  
Main characteristics of households returning to poverty in Dongxiang County in 2017.

Household characteristics				Head of household characteristics			
Category	Type	Number of households	Percentage (%)	Category	Type	Number of people	Percentage (%)
Farmer attribute	General poor	136	35.40	Ethnicity	Dongxiang	333	86.72
	Low-income	246	64.10		Hui	4	1.04
	Extremely poor	2	0.50		Han	47	12.24
Year of poverty alleviation	2014	250	65.10	Health status	Healthy	283	73.70
	2015	103	26.82		Major illness	19	4.95
	2016	31	8.07		Chronic illness	50	13.02
Overall health status	All healthy	200	52.08	Labor ability	Disabled	32	8.33
	1 person disabled or Ill	57	14.84		Skilled labor	1	0.26
	2 people disabled or Ill	60	15.62		General labor	277	72.14
	3 people disabled or Ill	64	16.67		Semi-labor	4	1.04
	4 people disabled or Ill	3	0.78		Unable to Work	102	25.56
Family size	Two or less	36	9.37	Education level	High school	3	0.78
	Three	78	20.31		Junior high	21	5.47
	Four	99	25.78		Primary school	201	52.34
	Five or more	171	44.53		Illiterate/Semi-illiterate	159	41.41

Among the 384 households that returned to poverty in the study, classified by household characteristics, 136 were ordinary poor households, accounting for 35.4% of the total. A significantly larger group, 246 households, were low-income guarantee (dibao) households, making up 64.1%. Additionally, there were 2 households categorized as extreme poverty support households, representing only 0.5%. This data distribution reveals that households reliant on external aid for maintaining basic living standards, such as dibao and extreme poverty support households, are more prone to the risk of returning to poverty.

Regarding the historical timeline of poverty alleviation, the highest number of households that fell back into poverty were those that had been lifted out of poverty in 2014, totaling 250 households, which accounted for 65.10% of the returning households. This was followed by 103 households that had been alleviated in 2015, making up 26.82%, and only 31 households that had been alleviated in 2016, accounting for 8.07%. This pattern indicates that households alleviated earlier have a relatively higher risk of returning to poverty.

Analyzing the health status of these households, only 200 out of the 384 households were completely healthy, while the remaining 184 households had various health issues, including disabilities, chronic illnesses, or severe diseases. Specifically, 57 households had one member with a disability or illness, 60 households had two members affected, 64 households faced health issues in three members, and in extreme cases, 3 households had four members suffering from such conditions. This data highlights a significant concentration of disability and chronic illness among local families. In terms of the ethnic composition of household heads, the vast majority, 333 out of 384 heads of households, were of the Dongxiang ethnic group, accounting for 86.72%. There were 4 Hui ethnic household heads, making up 1.04%, and 47 Han ethnic household heads, accounting for 12.24%. This distribution aligns with Dongxiang County's status as the only Dongxiang autonomous county in China, underscoring the high proportion of the Dongxiang ethnic population in the area.

Regarding the health status and labor capability of household heads, 283 out of the 384 heads were healthy, making up 73.7%, while 101 heads were either ill or disabled, accounting for 26.3%. Among them, only one head had professional skills, representing a mere 0.26%, while the majority, 277 heads, had general labor capabilities, making up 72.14%. The remaining heads had weak or no labor capabilities. Overall, the health and labor capacity of the heads of households returning to poverty in Dongxiang County in 2017 were not ideal.

In terms of educational attainment, only 3 heads of households had a high school education, accounting for 0.78%. Those with a junior high school education numbered 21, making up 5.47%. The largest group, 201 heads, had a primary school education, accounting for 52.34%, while 159 heads were illiterate or semi-illiterate, making up 41.41%. In total, 93.75% of the heads had an education level of primary school or below, indicating generally low educational attainment among heads of households returning to poverty in Dongxiang County.

Regarding family size, most households consisted of three or more members. Notably, four-member households were quite common, totaling 99 households and accounting for 25.78% of the total. Households with five or more members made up a substantial proportion as well, reaching 44.53%, reflecting a significant presence of multi-generational families living together. This also suggests that these households bear considerable pressure in terms of labor burden and caregiving responsibilities.

Furthermore, a statistical analysis of the demographic characteristics of households returning to poverty in Dongxiang County in 2017 is presented in Table 4.

Among the 1,717 individuals in the households that returned to poverty (excluding 418 students), 515 were illiterate or semi-illiterate, 654 had a primary school education, 114 had reached junior high school level, and only 16 had a high school or technical secondary school education. This indicates that the overall educational level of the population.



**Table 4.**  
 Characteristics of households returning to poverty in Dongxiang County in 2017.

Total population characteristics				Causes of poverty			
Category	Type	Number of households	Proportion (%)	Category	Type	Number of People	Proportion (%)
Education level	High school or college	16	0.93	Inducing factors of poverty	Lack of funds	695	40.47
	Middle school	114	6.64		Lack of skills	321	18.69
	Primary school	654	38.09		Lack of motivation	203	11.82
	Illiterate / Semi- illiterate	515	29.99		Poor transportation	131	7.63
	Students	418	24.34		Illness	126	7.34
Labor capacity	Skilled	3	0.17		Lack of labor force	109	6.35
	General	965	56.20	Other situations	132	7.69	
	None or weak	749	43.62				

Returning to poverty is generally low, mainly concentrated at the illiterate/semi-illiterate and primary school levels. Furthermore, there is a positive correlation between lower educational levels and an increased risk of returning to poverty.

From the overall labor force status of these households, out of the 1,717 individuals, only 3 were skilled laborers, 965 were general laborers, and a significant 749 were either without labor ability or had weak labor abilities, accounting for 43.6%. This data reveals that insufficient labor force is a key factor limiting household income and increasing the risk of returning to poverty. More importantly, the scarcity of skilled laborers indicates that merely having a labor force is not enough; the quality and skills of the labor force are equally crucial in reducing the risk of returning to poverty. Further analysis shows that among the 968 individuals with labor ability, only 370, or 38.22%, chose to work outside the home to increase family income. Of these 370 individuals, only 189 worked outside for six months or more per year, representing just 19.52% of all those with labor ability. This suggests that working outside the home is not a major income source for households returning to poverty, often serving merely as a supplementary livelihood means.

Analyzing the main real causes of poverty among the 1,717 individuals, nearly 40.47%, or 695 individuals, fell into poverty due to a shortage of funds, highlighting the weak economic foundation of the households and their insufficient ability to withstand internal and external risks. The second most significant factor was a lack of skills, affecting 321 individuals or 18.69%. Additionally, other factors such as lack of personal development motivation, inconvenient transportation, illness, and labor shortage also contributed to poverty, impacting 203, 131, 126, and 109 individuals, respectively. The remaining 132 individuals fell into poverty due to other reasons such as education, water resource shortages, natural disasters, insufficient land, and disabilities.

### *3.3. Case Descriptions and Analysis of Households Returning to Poverty*

#### *3.3.1. Case 1: Low Educational Level and Poor Employment Skills*

Interviewee: Xiao, from Shenjiaping Village, Shiyuan Township, Jishishan County (Ethnicity: Salar, currently under poverty monitoring, initially identified as poor in 2013, alleviated in 2014, and re-identified as poor in 2017 due to labor shortage).

Interview Content: “There are five people in my family. My three children all attend primary school in the village. Every year, I go to Xinjiang to work for a few months. Since I have never been to school and cannot read or write, I can only do agricultural and miscellaneous work such as pollinating melons. After four or five months, I earn about 14,000 to 15,000 yuan after expenses. The rest of the time, I dig for caterpillar fungus in the mountains, and my wife farms at home. She has also never been to school, so it is inconvenient for her to work outside, plus she needs to take care of the children. But farming doesn’t earn much; we have 9.42 mu (about 1.55 acres) of land where we grow rapeseed, wheat, potatoes, and soybeans, earning about 2,000 yuan a year. The village suggested we try cattle raising, but I thought the cost of buying cattle was high, and if the cattle got sick, the loss would be significant, so I didn’t pursue it.”

From the local village cadres, we learned that Shenjiaping Village consists of six communities with 277 registered households and 1,151 registered residents, of which 236 households and 1,062 people actually live in the village. The village is home to six ethnic groups: Han, Salar, Bonan, Dongxiang, Hui, and Tu, with ethnic minorities accounting for as much as 79.7% of the population, and Salar people making up 35.7%, the highest concentration of Salar people in the county. The total arable land in the village is 1,668 mu, with an average of 1.57 mu per capita. At the end of 2013, the village was identified as a deeply impoverished village, with 159 households and 676 individuals registered as poor, resulting in a poverty incidence rate of 63.7%.

Regarding Xiao’s personal situation, a support cadre commented, “Now the national policy is excellent, and there are many job opportunities in the town, especially at the umbrella factory. We have also organized various skills training sessions, but some people have a mental block and are unwilling to accept new things or communicate with others to work in a factory. They prefer to follow acquaintances to Xinjiang for work. Additionally, their low educational level means that even though they have attended livestock breeding training, they are reluctant to try cattle raising to increase their

income. Their willingness to take the initiative to make money and live a better life is not strong, and the expenses of raising children at home are quite substantial.”

### 3.3.2. *Single Source of Income and Insufficient Ability to Withstand Market Risks*

Interviewee: Ma, from Dadun Village, Dahejia Town, Jishishan County (Ethnicity: Bonan, identified as poor in 2013, alleviated in 2014, and re-identified as poor in 2015 due to lack of funds).

Interview Content: “There are nine people in my family, including my wife and me, my parents, four daughters, and one son. My family has always been poor, so I got married relatively late. Now, all the children are still in school, and we mainly rely on cattle raising for income. In 2014, with encouragement from support cadres, I started raising cattle. Initially, I bought four cows, and the government provided subsidies. But raising cattle is not easy; you have to look after them every day, clean the cowshed, and buy feed, all of which costs money. In the beginning, I lacked experience, and one cow died of illness. At that time, the market conditions were also poor, and we couldn’t sell the cattle at a good price. The cattle dealers earned more than we did from raising cattle. It felt like those who didn’t raise cattle were making more money than we were.”

Dadun Village is located in the northwest of Dahejia Town, Jishishan County, and is a Bonan ethnic settlement known as one of the “Three Bonan Villages.” It is bordered by Kangdiao Village to the east, Meipo Village to the south, and Xunhua County in Qinghai Province to the northwest. The village has convenient transportation, with roads connecting to the Lin-Da Highway and Xun-Da Road, and is only three kilometers from Dahejia Street. Dadun Village has eight communities, with 588 households and a total population of 2,610. At the end of 2013, the village had 153 registered poor households, involving 749 people. By the end of 2020, the number of households under poverty monitoring had decreased to six, involving 42 people, and there were four households on the verge of poverty, involving 26 people.

A source familiar with the situation said, “Ma’s family was very poor in the past, and it was even difficult for him to get married. Eventually, he married a woman who was seven or eight years older than him and not in good mental health. The village encouraged breeding, and many people joined breeding cooperatives, and Ma started raising cattle. He leased out his land to focus on cattle raising. But in the beginning, he lacked experience and skills, and combined with poor market conditions, he didn’t make much money from raising cattle. With so many children to support, the financial pressure was immense. Actually, he shouldn’t have leased out all the land. His parents and wife could have farmed, and he could have worked in a nearby factory. This way, he could have raised cattle without missing out on earning money, and the financial situation wouldn’t have been so bad.”

### 3.3.3. *Case 3: Poor Health and High Medical Expenses Due to Illness*

Interviewee: Ma, from Xinxing Village, Yanling Township, Dongxiang County (Ethnicity: Dongxiang, identified as poor in 2013, alleviated in 2015, and re-identified as poor in 2017 due to illness).

Interview Content: “There are nine people in my family, with only my second son and me having stable incomes. My eldest son lives independently, and my three grandchildren attend primary school and kindergarten. My wife and daughter-in-law suffer from long-term neurological diseases, and my mother has chronic lung disease requiring long-term medication. Until 2019, the government provided a chronic disease card for my mother to reduce the medical burden. I mainly engage in agriculture and animal husbandry, earning about 8,000 to 9,000 yuan annually, while my second son works outside and earns over 20,000 yuan a year. Despite the government-provided low-income guarantee and disability subsidies amounting to around 8,000 yuan, we still struggle financially due to the educational expenses for my grandchildren and the medical expenses for my family. Last year, my wife’s condition worsened, and after hospitalization, even after partial reimbursement, we still had to pay over 4,000 yuan out of pocket for medical and care-giving expenses.”

Regarding this situation, we consulted with village cadres. “Xinxing Village used to be a deeply impoverished area, with 292 households and 1,381 people. By the end of 2013, targeted poverty alleviation identified 178 households and 781 people as poor, with a poverty rate of 56.6%. In the past,

villagers lived scattered, and infrastructure was backward, but now through improved conditions, 21 families have completed relocation for poverty alleviation. Despite this, some families still face special difficulties, particularly in medical care. Although access to medical care has improved, treating major diseases still requires going to higher-level hospitals, such as those in the prefecture or provincial capitals. These hospitals have relatively lower reimbursement rates, and additional costs for caregiving, food, and other expenses must be considered, placing significant economic pressure on families. Linxia Prefecture has set the following standards for hospitalization reimbursement under the new rural cooperative medical system: Firstly, the deductible varies by the level of the medical institution, from 150 yuan at the township level to 3,000 yuan at the provincial level. Secondly, the reimbursement rate decreases from 85% at the township level to 60% at the provincial level. Lastly, for major illness insurance, after basic medical insurance reimbursement, any cumulative eligible expenses exceeding 5,000 yuan per year will be covered under major illness medical insurance according to regulations. Specifically, for rural registered poor populations, urban and rural low-income guarantee recipients, and extremely poor support recipients, the deductible for major illness insurance reimbursement is reduced to 2,000 yuan.”

### 3.3.4. Severe Population Aging and Insufficient Family Labor Force

Interviewee: Xin, from Xinfu Village, Tuqiao Town, Linxia County (Ethnicity: Han, originally classified as extremely poor household, identified as poor in 2013, alleviated in 2016, and included in the monitoring list for poverty prevention in September 2019 due to unstable poverty alleviation status, originally impoverished due to disability).

Interview Content: “Currently, there are four people in my family. I am in my eighties, with only a primary school education, and I suffer from gout, which greatly limits my mobility. My partner, who is seventy-five years old, also has limited education and suffers from a cerebral thrombosis, which further reduces our ability to work. Our son is fifty-five years old and has an intellectual disability due to an illness in his childhood that was not properly treated. His spouse has a low level of education and a fourth-degree physical disability, limiting her physical mobility. Despite their efforts, they can only manage light agricultural work due to their physical and educational limitations. Our two granddaughters are married, so there is no stable labor force in the family. Fortunately, we receive care and assistance from the government, relying on low-income support and disability subsidies to maintain our basic living. Additionally, our two granddaughters frequently visit us and provide us with several thousand yuan for living expenses, which makes us feel very warm. However, our biggest concern is our health. Last year, I was hospitalized in the county hospital for more than half a month due to illness, which not only worried my granddaughters but also affected their work in the factory. Therefore, we cherish our current life even more and hope that society can provide more attention and support to help us get through difficult times.”

Tuqiao Town is located in the northeast of Linxia County. It is not only the core area of the Wanqiyuan region but also an important sub-central town of Linxia County. Xinfu Village is located in the southwest of Tuqiao Town, covering a total area of 2.6 square kilometers. The village has 11 communities with 481 households and a total population of 1,815. The villagers have 1,743 mu of arable land, averaging about 0.96 mu per person. By the end of 2020, the per capita disposable income of rural residents in this area had reached 10,920 yuan. Additionally, the village has a primary school, a kindergarten, and a health center, providing basic education and medical services to the villagers.

From village cadres, we learned that the primary task for Xin’s family is to ensure their basic living needs are met. Besides maintaining their second-class low-income support and disability subsidies, we also need to actively seek ways to increase their household income. One consideration is to lease out the land they cannot farm to others, such as village farmers or for constructing vegetable greenhouses, to increase Xin’s family’s income. Moreover, we will mobilize contracted family doctors to visit regularly, check the elderly’s health status, and provide health knowledge to prevent the family from falling back into poverty due to illness. We will also make regular visits to Xin’s family to understand their mindset and help them build a positive attitude towards life. Encouraging them to use the land around their house to grow seasonal vegetables can reduce daily expenses, and any surplus

vegetables can be sold at the market as part of their household income. This not only improves their quality of life but also enhances the family's economic self-sufficiency.

### 3.3.5. Relocation for Poverty Alleviation "Moving Upstairs," Inadequate Subsequent Adaptation

Interviewee: Ma Mou, Jiayuan Community, Relocation for Poverty Alleviation in Daban Town, Dongxiang County (Ethnicity: Dongxiang, Poverty Identification Year: 2013, Poverty Alleviation Year: 2020, Same Year Included in Anti-Poverty Monitoring System, Original Cause of Poverty: Poor Transportation) Interview Content: "My family originally lived in Chejiawan Township, Dongxiang County, where transportation was extremely inconvenient, making it difficult to seek medical treatment or handle affairs. Additionally, the local natural environment was harsh, with frequent droughts. Although we had 7 acres of mountain land, the lack of water resulted in poor crop yields. Now, the children in the family are of school age, but the village lacks educational resources, making schooling very inconvenient. With the government's help, we moved into the centralized relocation community in the town. The living environment has significantly improved, and it is more convenient for the children to attend school, as the community even has a kindergarten. However, living here has also brought new pressures. Our family of 12 depends on me for support, including my spouse, three sons and their spouses, and four grandchildren. We have to pay for various expenses such as heating, water and electricity, property management, and daily groceries, which places a heavy burden on the family. We have already spent a lot on marrying off our sons and still have an outstanding 50,000-yuan precision poverty alleviation loan. My sons, having grown up in the mountains, lack skills and work experience, making it difficult for them to adapt to working or engaging in other industries elsewhere. They work in a local noodle restaurant, but their income is meager, and the pandemic has worsened business, significantly reducing their wages. We face many challenges and need to work hard to adapt to the new living environment and find ways to increase our income."

The Phoenix Mountain Community in Daban Town has 17 residential buildings covering 51 acres, aimed at resettling 686 households, totaling 3,836 former poor people from 12 townships, mostly from harsh natural environments like Chejiawan Township and Dashu Township. To ensure the relocated people adapt smoothly to the new environment, we have established detailed household records and provide necessary support through the community convenience service hall. Especially through labor training and employment transfer, we strive to increase the income of relocated households. A joint poverty alleviation workshop is set up near the community, where we actively offer employment opportunities to willing residents. However, during visits, we found that some families, like Ma's, have not fully adapted to urban life mentally. Although there are five or six laborers in the family, they generally lack the willingness to work. Despite arranging public welfare positions in the community and property for them, they did not persist in these jobs long-term. Additionally, their precision poverty alleviation loan remains largely unpaid, posing a major challenge. Therefore, we need to further intensify mobilization and encouragement efforts to help them build confidence, enhance skills, and integrate into urban life as soon as possible. By clarifying development ideas and encouraging them to increase income through work, we aim to achieve stable poverty alleviation.

### 3.3.6. Case 6: Losses from Natural Disasters, Inadequate Disaster Risk Response Capabilities

Interviewee: Chen, from Cuijia Village, Daban Town, Dongxiang County, Ethnicity: Dongxiang, Poverty Identification Year: 2013, Poverty Alleviation Year: 2015, Re-identified as Poor in: 2017, Original Cause of Poverty: Lack of Funds.

Interview Content: "I used to work in Xiamen with other villagers. Later, I learned that the government encourages impoverished households to develop farming and breeding industries, with policies offering subsidies for more production and more breeding, and even rewards if standards are met. I decided to return home and join the village's breeding cooperative. This cooperative was established in 2016 with an initial membership of 15 people, all of whom were poor households at the time. We focused on chicken farming, and initially, everyone was full of confidence. However, fate was unkind; in 2017, the avian flu caused losses to the cooperative. Following this, the "7.18 Flood" disaster in 2018 did not directly hit the cooperative, but the chickens later encountered Newcastle disease, leading to

continuous losses over several years. Although we received some insurance and disaster relief funds, my income was still severely affected.”

According to the investigation, Cuijia Village is composed of 12 communities, with a total of 818 households and a population of 3,810 people. Among these families, 608 households, involving 2,965 people, were included in the poverty files, with a poverty rate of about 77.8%. In recent years, through precise identification and resolution of specific problems for each household and community, we have achieved significant poverty alleviation results. However, we have noticed that many villagers still suffer from mental poverty. In response, we have taken active measures, including establishing cooperatives to promote common prosperity and increase income. Currently, the village has 8 cooperatives, but only 2 of them are operating normally, with the remaining 6 not carrying out substantial business activities. Chen’s breeding cooperative is one of the two that operates normally. Despite this, it also faces losses due to natural disasters and diseases. Additionally, our village is not the only place affected by natural disasters; the last severe rainstorm-induced flash flood caused greater losses to Guoyuan Township, reportedly with casualties.

### *3.3.7. Case 7: Slow Change in Ideology, Lack of Internal Motivation*

Interviewee: Zhao, from Zhaojia Village, Liangjiasi Township, Hezheng County, Ethnicity: Hui, Poverty Identification Year: 2013, Poverty Alleviation Year: 2014, Re-identified as Poor in: 2017, Original Cause of Poverty: Lack of Funds.

Interview Content: “Our family consists of 10 members, including my elderly parents who are both over 70 years old and in poor health. My spouse and I are both over 50 years old. Our eldest son’s family lives with us, including his spouse and their four children, two of whom are in primary school. In 2016, the government provided partial subsidies for our housing repairs. In 2017, the village encouraged the development of sheep farming, and I received 10,000 yuan to buy 15 sheep. By 2018, through some sort of stock participation, I could receive a few hundred yuan in dividends each year. But I noticed that some neighbors received multiple government subsidies when building houses, whereas my family received it only once. We mainly rely on agricultural income and the earnings from my son and daughter-in-law working outside to make a living. Despite this, life remains very difficult.”

According to the survey, “Located in the mountainous area, Zhaojia Village in Liangjiasi Township, Hezheng County, used to have relatively poor infrastructure such as roads, drinking water, and education. The village has a total arable land area of 1,668 acres, with an average per capita distribution of 0.85 acres, and the main crop is corn. The village is divided into 10 communities, with a total of 343 households and a population of 1,948. By the end of 2013, 161 households with 683 people were included in the poverty files, with a poverty rate of 56.17%. Currently, 10 households with 54 people are in an unstable state after being lifted out of poverty, and another 6 households with 30 people are marginally poor, facing the risk of falling back into poverty.”

Village cadres explained, “Due to Zhao’s lack of intrinsic motivation, we have provided all possible assistance and policy support based on their family’s specific situation. In 2016, they received a 11,500-yuan subsidy for renovating dangerous houses. In 2017, they received 10,000 yuan in basic industry support funds. In 2018 and 2019, they enjoyed the ‘1+3+5’ incentive support funds for two consecutive years and received dividends from stock participation. Their children also benefited from the ‘Two Exemptions and One Subsidy’ policy in primary education, with a total support amount of 6,800 yuan. Despite this, Zhao’s family is not very willing to actively engage in labor. Their son and daughter-in-law work outside for only 3 to 4 months each year. Once they earn enough money to solve immediate life problems, they stop working. To achieve real and stable poverty alleviation, we need to continue guiding their thinking, encouraging them to work harder and be more proactive, as they still have many children to care for.”

### *3.3.8. Case 8: Heavy Burden of Children’s Education, Risk of Returning to Poverty Due to Education*

Interviewee: Fan, from Xiaojia Village, Liuji Township, Jishishan County, Ethnicity: Han, Poverty Identification Year: 2013, Poverty Alleviation Year: 2015, Recognized as a Marginal Household in: 2019, Included in the Monitoring System, Original Cause of Poverty: Lack of Funds.

Interview Content: “Our family consists of six members: myself, my wife, and our four children. Two of our children are in high school, and the other two are attending university. The main source of our family’s income is the labor earnings of my wife and me. I work in Lanzhou, with an annual income of about 30,000 yuan, while my wife used to work as a cleaner in the village, earning more than 6,000 yuan per year. The government has provided significant support to our family, not only offering scholarships for the children in university but also helping with student loans to ease the tuition burden. My wife’s cleaning job was also a public welfare position provided by the village, for which we are deeply grateful. However, the expenses for having four children in school simultaneously are immense. While the university tuition is covered by loans, the high school fees are still substantial, and the daily living expenses for all the children add to our financial strain. Currently, we have no savings and are in debt to the tune of over 60,000 yuan from friends, relatives, and the bank.”

Xiaojia Village, located in Liuji Township, consists of 14 communities, with a total of 586 households and a population of 2,965 people. When the precise poverty alleviation plan was launched in 2013, 289 households, totaling 1,358 people, were included in the poverty records, with a poverty rate of nearly 45.8%. In October 2019, the village held an assessment meeting involving the village work team and members of the village-level organization. During this meeting, they decided to define ordinary farmers with an income of less than 5,000 yuan and those facing poverty risks due to health issues, education burdens, or natural disasters as marginal households. Simultaneously, households with a per capita net income below 5,000 yuan and at risk of poverty due to health issues, education burdens, natural disasters, industrial failure, or employment instability were marked as poverty monitoring households and subjected to continuous monitoring to implement targeted assistance measures. By 2020, the system recorded 9 poverty monitoring households with 51 people, 3 of which were impoverished due to education burdens and 6 due to health problems. Additionally, 20 households with 97 people were identified as marginal households, including 2 due to natural disasters, 3 due to education burdens, and 15 due to health problems.

Regarding Fan’s family being re-included in the poverty monitoring due to education, village cadres commented: “The difficulties faced by Fan’s family are temporary. We believe that once the children complete their studies and start working, the risk of returning to poverty will disappear. We are not worried about this and expect them to enjoy more happiness in the future. Currently, we are actively seeking ways to help them through this temporary difficult period.”

#### **4. Measures to Prevent the Return to Poverty in Linxia Hui Autonomous Prefecture**

As the regional issue of absolute poverty is being resolved in stages, Linxia Prefecture has embraced new tasks under the new era’s context. The principle of “Poverty alleviation without removing policies” is actively followed, with Linxia Prefecture responding to the central and provincial governments’ guidelines. The focus is on integrating poverty alleviation achievements with the rural revitalization strategy, emphasizing the monitoring and assistance to prevent a return to poverty and addressing the five key tasks of rural revitalization. Linxia Prefecture is steadily advancing these tasks, including preventing a return to poverty, industrial development, rural construction, environmental management, and more, to ensure the stability of poverty alleviation results and lay a foundation for the new stage of rural revitalization. A series of measures have been taken to ensure the orderly progress of various tasks.

##### *4.1. Strengthening Government Functions in Poverty Risk Prevention*

To effectively prevent a return to poverty and continuously promote rural revitalization, Linxia Prefecture has established a special Rural Revitalization Leadership Group, co-chaired by the main leaders of the Prefecture Committee and the Prefecture Government. The original 15 poverty alleviation special working groups have been optimized and adjusted to form five major revitalization work task forces, each with 21 dedicated working groups, ensuring a smooth transition from preventing a return to poverty and consolidating poverty alleviation results to comprehensive rural revitalization. The Prefecture Committee and Prefecture Government have signed responsibility agreements with 17 prefecture-level leaders, 27 prefecture-level departments, and the party committees and governments of

8 counties and cities, establishing a comprehensive work responsibility system that covers every level. By the end of June 2021, Linxia Prefecture had organized 3 Rural Work Leadership Group meetings and 5 Rural Revitalization Strategy Leadership Group meetings, thoroughly arranging and promoting the consolidation of poverty alleviation achievements and the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy. The Leadership Group Office conducted five rounds of inspections focusing on dynamic monitoring to prevent a return to poverty, support for individuals in extreme poverty, families with no labor capacity, and model village and town construction. These inspections covered 8 counties and cities, 80 towns, 159 villages, and 1,766 households. Follow-up inspections were also conducted to ensure that counties and cities thoroughly analyzed issues and implemented effective rectifications.

#### 4.2. Implementing a Series of Measures to Strengthen the Institutional Guarantee System

To prevent large-scale returns to poverty, Linxia Prefecture has not only strengthened organizational leadership and fully implemented provincial regulations but has also formulated prefecture-level management measures from an institutional perspective. This includes establishing a macro-level dynamic anti-poverty mechanism and micro-level specific executable family economic status assessment methods. Measures cover integrating agricultural-related fiscal funds, supporting small loans during the transition period, employment transition in poverty alleviation workshops, promoting employment through work-for-relief programs, expanding health assistance, strengthening medical security, and expanding consumption assistance to support rural revitalization. From overall policy planning to detailed policies of various departments and the formulation of supervision and assessment policies, Linxia Prefecture has built a comprehensive, multi-level anti-poverty policy system, providing a solid institutional guarantee for consolidating and expanding poverty alleviation achievements. Specific anti-poverty documents are listed in Table 5.

**Table 5.**  
Gansu province and linxia prefecture documents on preventing poverty recurrence.

No.	Issuing organization	Document name
1	Gansu provincial committee of the CPC and Gansu provincial government	Implementation opinions on comprehensively promoting rural revitalization and accelerating agricultural and rural modernization
2	Gansu provincial committee of the CPC and Gansu provincial government	Implementation opinions on achieving effective linkage between consolidating and expanding poverty alleviation achievements and rural revitalization
3	General office of the gansu provincial committee of the CPC and general office of the Gansu provincial government	Notice on coordinating the work of consolidating and expanding poverty alleviation achievements and effectively linking with rural revitalization
4	Gansu provincial leading group for poverty alleviation	Notice on issuing key points of Gansu province's work in 2021 to consolidate and expand poverty alleviation achievements and effectively link with rural revitalization
5	Gansu provincial leading group for poverty alleviation	Notice on issuing the work plan for 2021 on east-west cooperation and central unit targeted assistance to consolidate and expand poverty alleviation achievements and effectively link with rural revitalization



6	Gansu provincial committee of the CPC rural work leading group (Gansu province rural re-vitalization strategy leading group)	Notice on issuing the work plan for establishing a dynamic monitoring and assistance mechanism to prevent poverty in Gansu province
7	Gansu provincial office of poverty alleviation and three other departments	Notice on issuing the evaluation and verification method for the economic status of households monitored to prevent poverty in Gansu province
8	Gansu provincial department of finance and twelve other departments	Notice on issuing the management measures for the integration of agricultural-related funds in Gansu province
9	Gansu provincial department of finance and seven other departments	Notice on issuing the implementation measures for the management of financial subsidy funds to promote rural revitalization in Gansu province
10	Gansu provincial department of finance	Notice on implementing the ministry of finance's plan to achieve effective linkage between consolidating and expanding poverty alleviation achievements and rural revitalization
11	Gansu provincial bureau of rural revitalization and Gansu provincial department of agriculture and rural affairs	Notice on strengthening the construction and management of county-level projects for consolidating and expanding poverty alleviation achievements and rural revitalization
12	Gansu provincial development and reform commission and nine other departments	Implementation plan for actively promoting the work-for-relief method in the construction of agricultural and rural infrastructure
13	Gansu provincial department of human resources and social security and Gansu provincial bureau of rural revitalization	Notice on promoting the transformation and sustainable development of poverty alleviation workshops into rural employment factories
14	Gansu provincial health commission and twelve other departments	Notice on issuing the implementation plan for consolidating and expanding health poverty alleviation achievements and effectively linking with rural revitalization
15	Gansu provincial medical security bureau and seven other departments	Notice on issuing the implementation plan for consolidating and expanding medical security poverty alleviation achievements and effectively linking with rural revitalization
16	Gansu provincial department of civil affairs	Notice on consolidating and expanding poverty alleviation achievements in the field of civil affairs and effectively linking with rural revitalization

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17	Gansu provincial disabled persons' federation and Gansu provincial bureau of rural revitalization	Implementation opinions on consolidating and expanding poverty alleviation achievements for disabled persons
18	Gansu supervision bureau of China banking and insurance regulatory commission and five other departments	Notice on deepening and solidly carrying out the work of small loans for the poor population during the transition period
19	People's government of Linxia hui autonomous prefecture	Notice on further strengthening and improving temporary relief work
20	Linxia prefecture federation of trade unions	Notice on issuing opinions on using trade union funds to increase welfare procurement to consolidate poverty alleviation achievements
21	Office of the commission for discipline inspection of Linxia prefecture	Implementation opinions on supervising and ensuring the effective linkage between consolidating and expanding poverty alleviation achievements and rural revitalization

#### 4.3. Improving the Dynamic Monitoring and Assistance Mechanism to Prevent Poverty

Linxia Hui Autonomous Prefecture has issued the "Implementation Measures for Establishing a Monitoring and Assistance Mechanism to Prevent Poverty Return," innovatively constructing a multi-level work process encompassing household self-application, village-level reporting, township-level review, and county-level approval. Through the joint efforts of community, village, and township levels, a comprehensive system for identifying, reviewing, and supporting people at risk of poverty has been formed, combining self-reporting by households, departmental information verification, and regular visits by cadres. Monthly supervision, reporting, scheduling, and comparison are conducted to ensure the efficient execution of dynamic monitoring and assistance to prevent a return to poverty. Five comprehensive inspections have been carried out, covering poverty prevention monitoring, support for people in extreme poverty, households with no labor capacity, and model village and town construction. These inspections have covered 8 counties and cities, 80 towns, 159 villages, and 1,766 households. In 2020, a total of 11,995 households with 55,320 people were identified and included, effectively eliminating the risk of returning to poverty by implementing at least two specific assistance measures. In 2021, an additional 2,204 households with 10,642 people were identified and included, each receiving a personalized assistance plan. Data sharing and measure coordination were conducted with relevant departments. Special care and assistance were arranged for vulnerable groups such as extremely poor households, households with five guarantees, families with no labor capacity, and families with severe disabilities, addressing their practical difficulties. Furthermore, the prefecture is exploring the establishment of a household information system covering all households to further improve the poverty prevention monitoring and assistance mechanism, ensuring transparency, accuracy, and effectiveness.

#### 4.4. Enhancing the Intellectual Support System for Village-Level Poverty Risk Prevention

To ensure that village assistance efforts do not diminish, Linxia Hui Autonomous Prefecture strictly implements relevant requirements, encouraging outstanding cadres from the prefecture and county levels to take up positions in villages, thereby strengthening and enriching grassroots work teams. The leadership responsibility system is continuously implemented, ensuring that each leader has their own "responsibility area." At the same time, the assistance relationship between the prefecture, county, and village levels is maintained, following the principle of "one person is transferred,

one person is supplemented." As of the end of June 2021, 533 staff members have been adjusted (including 98 at the prefecture level and 435 at the county level). The number of village assistance work teams in poverty alleviation villages and key rural revitalization villages is maintained at 3 to 5 people. Currently, there are 1,056 work teams with 3,407 members working continuously in the villages, implementing a daily attendance system through DingTalk to ensure the stability of the work teams and the continuity of their work. Additionally, the role model effect of entrepreneurship and wealth leaders in consolidating poverty alleviation achievements is fully utilized. A total of 2,886 entrepreneurship and wealth leaders from poverty alleviation villages have been selected across the prefecture, receiving 2,529 training sessions, leading or creating 2,267 industrial projects, averaging 3.49 projects per village, driving 11,686 households to increase their income, with each leader driving an average of 5.15 households and each household increasing their income by 1,966 yuan.

#### *4.5. Utilizing Industrial and Employment Engines to Achieve Continuous and Stable Income Growth for Farmers*

A comprehensive promotion of the optimization and upgrading of the agricultural industry structure is carried out, taking industrial development as a core strategy, driving innovation in production methods and improving agricultural quality and efficiency through agricultural structure adjustment. Utilizing industrial policy support, financial rewards, and demonstration leadership, innovation thinking and methods in agricultural production are stimulated among the masses. Efforts are focused on developing locally characteristic planting industries such as forestry, flowers, quinoa, edible mushrooms, highland summer vegetables, Chinese medicinal materials, and lilies, transforming traditional crops into facility-based, high-efficiency agricultural models, with characteristic planting areas reaching 1.7 million acres. In 2021, 16.9 million yuan was invested to support 4,080 households in developing the breeding industry, including 2.41 million yuan for 287 monitored households. At the same time, 29.76 million yuan was invested to support 38,900 households in developing the planting industry, including 360,000 yuan for 285 monitored households. Agricultural insurance coverage reached 136,000 household times, accounting for 80.6% of the provincial target. The number of farmers' professional cooperatives in the prefecture reached 5,134, with 14 leading enterprises newly introduced and cultivated, and 3 new fruit and vegetable preservation facilities built.

During the winter and spring off-season and the return of some migrant workers, personalized strategies and precise investments are implemented, widely, orderly, and purposefully conducting vocational skills education. As of June 30, 2021, a total of 1,384 training sessions covering 50 occupations, including edible mushroom cultivation, beef noodle making, excavator operation, welding, electrical work, Chinese cooking, beauty and hairdressing, and more, have been held, training 110,400 people, including 13,900 from poverty alleviation labor forces, exceeding the annual training target in the first half of the year. The total training expenditure reached 32.024 million yuan, and 48,681 training qualification certificates were issued. Simultaneously, a dual strategy of stabilizing jobs and promoting labor mobility is adhered to. A total of 544,400 urban and rural labor forces were transferred across the prefecture, including 221,400 from poverty alleviation labor forces, creating 8.667 billion yuan in labor income. To support entrepreneurship and drive employment, the total amount of the prefecture's entrepreneurial loan guarantee fund increased to 919 million yuan, with an additional 155 million yuan injected into the guarantee fund, issuing 16,800 entrepreneurial guarantee loans, totaling 1.618 billion yuan, driving 34,000 people into employment. Continuing to organize labor forces to work in Xiamen, as of the end of June 2021, 4,984 people were sent to Xiamen, including 2,688 from poverty alleviation labor forces. Utilizing the new opportunities of counterpart assistance, 15 mutual visits and exchanges with the Jinan Human Resources and Social Security Department were conducted, holding 8 special job fairs, achieving employment assistance for 1,137 people in Jinan. Promoting the adoption of modern enterprise management systems, production operations, and market marketing concepts in poverty alleviation workshops, advancing the transformation and upgrading of poverty alleviation workshops into employment factories. Across the prefecture, 333 rural employment assistance workshops were built, employing 12,375 people, and 8 rural employment factories were

established, employing 596 people.

## 5. Conclusion

This article provides a practical perspective on the situation of poverty return in Linxia Hui Autonomous Prefecture in recent years and reviews the current poverty prevention policies in the region. When describing the current situation of poverty return, we analyze it from both regional and individual levels.

### 5.1. Regional Level Analysis

At the regional level, we use recent poverty return data to perform statistical analysis, revealing the characteristics of annual volatility, regional differences, the diversity of causes, and the instability of the main inducing factors in Linxia Prefecture's poverty return phenomenon. The analysis shows that while certain areas experience higher rates of poverty return, others may have more stable conditions. The causes of poverty return are varied, ranging from natural disasters to economic fluctuations, highlighting the complexity and multifaceted nature of poverty in the region.

### 5.2. Individual Level Analysis

At the individual level, we take the example of poverty return households in Dongxiang County in 2017 for an in-depth demographic analysis. Factors such as the number of family members, education level, health status, age structure, and labor force status are examined to understand their impact on poverty return. This analysis illustrates how larger families with lower education levels and poorer health conditions are more prone to falling back into poverty. Additionally, the age structure and availability of a labor force within the family play critical roles in determining the family's economic resilience.

### 5.3. Case Studies

Through the investigation of typical cases, we further analyze the actual causes of poverty return. These cases provide detailed insights into the personal experiences and challenges faced by families who have fallen back into poverty. For instance, one case might highlight the impact of a natural disaster that wiped out a family's agricultural produce, while another might show how medical expenses for a family member's chronic illness depleted savings and led to financial instability.

### 5.4. Review of Poverty Return Prevention Policies

Finally, we conduct a comprehensive review of Linxia Prefecture's poverty return risk policies and measures. The region has implemented several strategies to mitigate the risk of poverty return, including:

**Dynamic Monitoring and Assistance Mechanisms:** Linxia Prefecture has established a comprehensive system for identifying and supporting households at risk of returning to poverty. This involves household self-application,

village-level reporting, township-level review, and county-level approval, combined with regular supervision, reporting, and comparison to ensure effective implementation.

**Strengthening Government Functions:** The prefecture has formed a special Rural Revitalization Leadership Group and optimized previous poverty alleviation task forces into five major revitalization work task forces. This restructuring ensures a smooth transition from poverty prevention to comprehensive rural revitalization.

**Support for Vulnerable Groups:** Special care and assistance are provided for extremely poor households, households with five guarantees, families with no labor capacity, and families with severe disabilities. Dedicated personnel are responsible for addressing their practical difficulties and ensuring they receive the necessary support.

**Industrial and Employment Initiatives:** The prefecture promotes the optimization and upgrading of the agricultural industry structure, supporting the development of locally characteristic planting industries and providing financial support for breeding and planting industries. Vocational skills

training and employment support are also key strategies, ensuring that households have stable and continuous income sources.

**Policy Coordination and Data Sharing:** The prefecture ensures data sharing and measure coordination with relevant departments, allowing for personalized assistance plans for each household and a comprehensive approach to poverty prevention.

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