

## Event Highlights

**Workshop on The People's Republic of China (PRC)-Japan-the Republic of Korea (ROK)  
Rural Vitalization Experiences: Implications for ASEAN Countries  
Nanning, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region  
25 June 2019**

The workshop was hosted by the International Poverty Reduction Center in China (IPRCC) and co-organized by China Institute for South-South Cooperation in Agriculture (CISSCA). ADB-PRC Regional Knowledge Sharing Initiative and Guangxi Foreign Capital Poverty Reduction Project Management Center supported the event. The workshop objective was to gather experts in the field of rural development from the Plus Three countries (the PRC, Japan, ROK) to share their experiences in tackling rural development challenges. Four topics were covered: rural vitalization strategies and policies in the Plus Three countries, industrial development and rural income generation in rural areas, social organizations and services in rural communities; and potential development cooperation with ASEAN countries.

Forty-five scholars from the Plus Three countries, officials from the PRC, ASEAN countries, representatives from the ADB and IPRCC, and media attended the event. Experts from ASEAN and international organizations joined as discussants or observers. The workshop would produce a vision and actions for rural vitalization in the three countries and beyond. Opportunities for future collaborations among the Plus Three with ASEAN countries would be explored to speed up rural development and reduce poverty.

### Highlights

Here are key highlights of the event:

- The Plus-3 countries share many common features and challenges in rural development. Their arable land per capita is rather limited making small-scale farming a norm. Share of agricultural to GDP is less than 10% in Japan, 7.0% in the PRC, and 2% in ROK. Still rural development remains a priority in the face of aging rural population, migration of young labor force, rising inequality, and feminization of agriculture.
- Experiences on rural development from Plus-3 countries can be usefully shared. PRC's and ROK's approaches are typified by strong government support in mobilizing myriad resources for infrastructure development. There has also been a strong emphasize on developing human resources in rural areas through training of village leaders (ROK), sending work teams to rural areas (the PRC), and establishing community co-builder projects (Japan). Similarly, the synergy between rural-urban integration has been promoted. In the PRC, rural vitalization has emphasized industrial prosperity in rural areas. And in Japan, eco-friendly lifestyle and cottage-like industry have encouraged the young to relocate to rural areas.
- Some questions however remain open. Is government support sustainable given an aging population and increasingly strained fiscal position? Is the decline in rural areas preventable and if so at what cost? What is the most efficient farming system given limited arable land and resources? What lessons can ASEAN learn from the Plus-3 countries and are the lessons country specific?

**Next Steps**

The main organizers, IPRCC and CISSCA are working on a report that summarizes the workshop discussions. The report aims to identify targeted projects where the Plus-3 countries can help ASEAN countries to developing their rural areas and reduce poverty.

**Contact persons**

Ms. Zhang Chuanhong (Diana), Associate Professor, Department of Development Studies, CISSCA; email: dianazhang@cau.edu.cn.

Ms. Li Linyi, Deputy Director, International Exchange Division, IPRCC, email: lilinyi@iprcc.org.cn.