

Article

Successful Targeting Policies in International Practices (the Case of the People's Republic of China)

Baratov Javlonbek Norjigitovich*¹

1. Researcher, Samarkand State University named after Sharaf Rashidov

* Correspondence: javlonbek.baratov97@gmail.com

Abstract: This article examines the effectiveness of the "targeting" strategy in international poverty reduction practices, using the example of the People's Republic of China. Between 2013 and 2020, China successfully implemented its "Targeted Poverty Alleviation" policy, lifting over 800 million people out of absolute poverty. The article analyzes the core principles of this approach, the use of technology and management mechanisms, localized assistance models, and the results achieved. It also explores the lessons Uzbekistan can learn from China's experience, such as the development of digital platforms, the role of local governance, and improving the accuracy of social assistance. The article may be of interest to policymakers and researchers working in the field of poverty reduction.

Keywords: Digital Platforms, Social Protection, Precision, Recall (Coverage), Data Quality, Targeting Mechanism, Poverty Identification, Unified Electronic Profiling, Automated Monitoring, Digital Literacy

Citation: Norjigitovich B. J. Successful Targeting Policies in International Practices (the Case of the People's Republic of China). American Journal of Economics and Business Management 2025, 8(8), 4256-4262.

Received: 30th Jun 2025

Revised: 11th Jul 2025

Accepted: 31st Jul 2025

Published: 31st Aug 2025



Copyright: © 2025 by the authors. Submitted for open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

1. Introduction

China has long adhered to a state-led, top-down approach to poverty alleviation, where the central government assumed primary responsibility for addressing poverty. Although China's fight against poverty has spanned several decades, it was only in recent years that the central government elevated nationwide poverty eradication to the highest priority, mobilizing vast resources to address the problem[1].

The word "Target" originates from English, meaning "goal" or "objective." In November 2015, President Xi Jinping openly declared that China would eliminate poverty nationwide by 2020 through the launch of a new poverty reduction scheme called "Targeted Poverty Alleviation" (TPA). This initiative was considered a crucial part of realizing the "Chinese Dream," with the aim of lifting the remaining 70 million people living in poverty above the poverty line.

Unlike previous strategies, TPA was designed around the concept of precision at every stage of the poverty reduction process. Poor households were to be clearly identified, the root causes of their poverty analyzed, and tailored poverty reduction projects introduced that matched the specific conditions and capacities of each household[2].

Moreover, China's household-based targeting scheme differed significantly from other poverty reduction programs around the world. Under this approach, local government officials were assigned direct responsibility for implementing targeted measures, assisting individual poor families, and monitoring household-level progress in poverty alleviation [3].

Research Objective

The purpose of this article is to analyze successful targeting policies applied in international practices, particularly in the People's Republic of China, in the field of poverty reduction. It aims to study their core principles, methods, and outcomes, as well as to identify the useful aspects of this experience that may be applicable to developing countries, including Uzbekistan[4].

2. Materials and Methods

This article is devoted to the study of successful targeting policies implemented in the People's Republic of China and is based on a qualitative research approach. Through an in-depth examination of international experiences, the study aims to assess the effectiveness of poverty reduction strategies and targeted assistance systems[5].

The research methodology is structured around the following methods:

- Literature Review. The formation, practice, and outcomes of targeting policies were analyzed on the basis of international scholarly articles, official statistical data, government documents of China, as well as reports published by international organizations such as the World Bank, the United Nations, and UNDP.
- Comparative Method. Targeted assistance policies in China were compared with those applied in other developing countries, identifying both distinctive and common features.
- Analytical Approach. The effectiveness of targeting policies was examined from the perspectives of social justice, efficiency, and their integration with digital technologies.

3. Analysis and Findings

Over the past four decades, China has undergone unprecedented economic and social transformation. Between 1978 and 2003, the country's GDP grew at an average annual rate of 9.4 percent. This rapid economic development, combined with land reforms and the liberalization of agricultural markets, contributed significantly to poverty reduction. However, these achievements also intensified the gap between rural and urban areas, as well as between coastal and inland regions[6].

In response to these disparities, the central government introduced targeted strategies aimed at the most impoverished rural communities. According to international research, between 1981 and 2001, approximately 75–80 percent of poverty reduction in China was attributable to efforts directed specifically at rural poverty alleviation [7].

A distinctive feature of China's approach has been the implementation of the Targeted Poverty Alleviation (TPA) program, launched in 2015 under the leadership of President Xi Jinping. Unlike previous strategies, TPA was designed to ensure precision at every stage of poverty reduction: households were identified individually, the root causes of their poverty were analyzed, and tailored measures were implemented to suit specific local conditions. Local government officials were directly assigned responsibility for monitoring and assisting poor households within their jurisdictions, making accountability a key component of the program[8].

In the Table 1. shows that by 2020, China officially declared the eradication of extreme poverty, lifting nearly 800 million people out of poverty — a figure unprecedented in human history. The success of this policy demonstrated that sustainable poverty reduction requires not only economic growth but also targeted, context-specific interventions, effective governance, and the integration of digital monitoring systems.

Table 1. Targeted Poverty Alleviation in China: Years and Key Indicators.

year	Program / Policy Name	Main Targeting Method	Poverty Rate	Achieved Results
2000	Dibao (Minimum Livelihood Guarantee)	Income-based cash compensation	~30%	In its initial phase, the program encompassed 20 million people, leading to a gradual decline in the poverty rate.
2010	The new poverty monitoring system	Household-level inspections and community-based registries	~17%	The poverty database was enhanced and refined.
2013	Targeted Poverty Alleviation (TPA).	Formulating household-level development plans with a localized approach.	10.2%	Within the framework of a six-year plan, tailored support measures were delivered to every household.
2014	The digital identification process was launched	Utilization of the national database and ID cards for precise targeting	9.4%	Over 80 million individuals living in poverty were included in the digital registry.
2016	Programs for vocational preparation and skills development	“Vocational training and skills development programs.	5.7%	8.3 million people were provided with new jobs
2020	The year of official poverty eradication.	Comprehensive and multi-dimensional targeting strategies.	0%	According to official statistics, 98.99 million people were lifted out of poverty, and 832 counties were officially recognized as impoverished.

China is the largest developing country in the world with the highest number of poor people. Since the establishment of the People’s Republic of China, the government has been committed to reducing poverty. Since 2013, a targeted strategy for poverty eradication has been implemented with the aim of enabling the remaining poor population to escape poverty and achieve a moderately prosperous society by 2020[9]. These efforts to eliminate poverty have yielded remarkable results. As illustrated in Figure 1, by the end of 2018, the number of rural poor had declined from 98.99 million at the end of 2012 to 16.6 million, representing a total reduction of 82.39 million people. Meanwhile, the poverty rate fell from 10.2 percent in 2012 to 1.7 percent, marking a decrease of 8.5 percentage points overall[9].

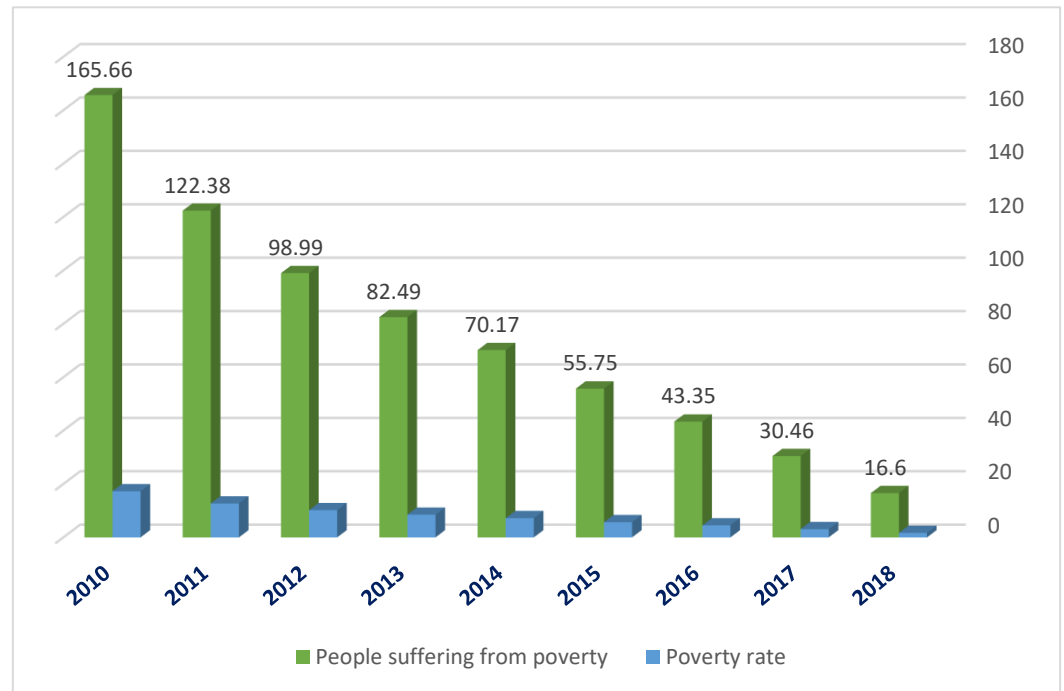


Figure 1. Population suffering from poverty and poverty rate China.

By the end of 2020, China declared itself completely free from extreme poverty. The significant achievements in the fight against poverty, despite the relatively low average share of development consumption and enjoyment consumption in the overall consumption of poor farmers in China, underscore the success of targeted anti-poverty policies. Consumption is a decisive catalyst in the process of economic development. It can directly and effectively contribute to economic growth, and the level of household consumption can directly reflect the quality of people's daily lives. Accordingly, we aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of targeted policies aimed at poverty alleviation. How does poverty alleviation policy affect rural household consumption? Can precise poverty alleviation policies change the consumption patterns of the population and, as a result, strengthen their intrinsic motivation to achieve sustainable poverty eradication? This study can provide empirical references and data to support the "rural revitalization" strategy post-2020, enhance the level and quality of consumption of underprivileged households, assist and guide poor families in developing rational consumption habits, thereby improving the living standards and lifestyle of local underprivileged households. It has practical significance in examining the impact of targeted poverty alleviation policies on the consumption behavior of poor rural families[10].

In the Figure 2. shows that the People's Republic of China was among the first to recognize the independence of Uzbekistan on December 27, 1991. Since then, diplomatic relations and cooperative ties between the two countries have been effectively maintained. Today, the comprehensive strategic partnership between Uzbekistan and China is developing rapidly and steadily. Mutual visits and meetings between the leaders of the two countries have further strengthened cooperation at all levels. In this article, we also briefly touch upon the state of employment among the population in Uzbekistan[11].

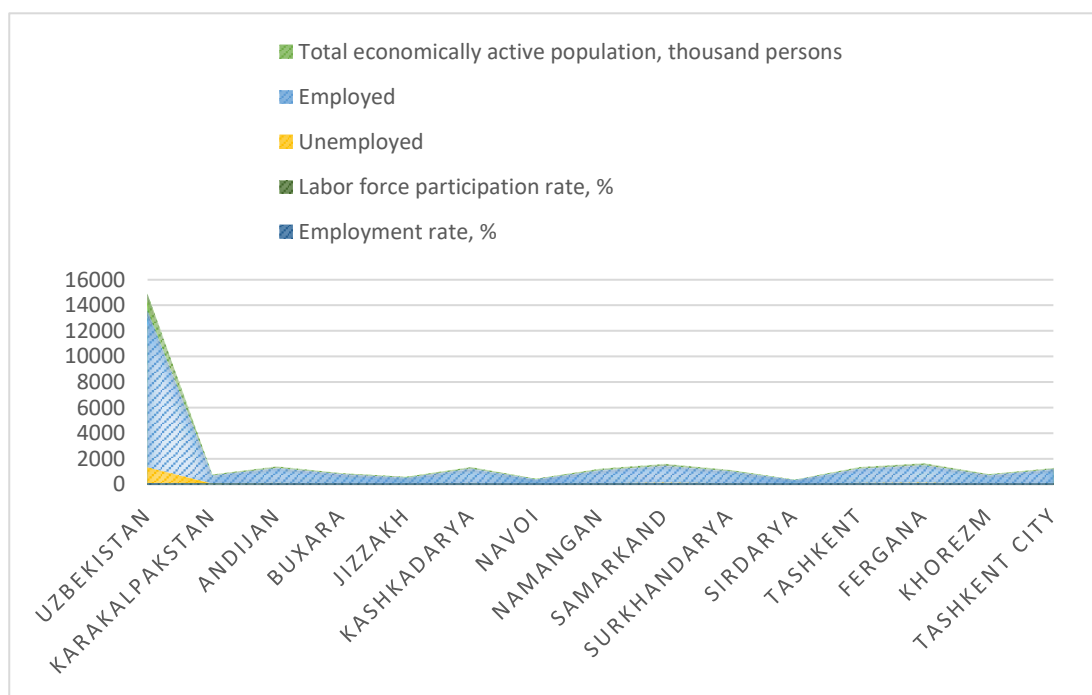


Figure 2. Economically active population and employed persons by regions of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

As of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the total economically active population amounts to 14,876.4 thousand people. Of these, 13,541.1 thousand are employed, while 1,335.3 thousand are unemployed. The economic activity rate stands at 75%, and the employment rate at 68.3%. This indicates that three out of four people actively participate in the labor market, though not all of them are employed[12].

Analyzing by regions, the highest economic activity rate is observed in Tashkent city (86.9%), which also has the highest employment rate (80.5%). In contrast, the Republic of Karakalpakstan shows the lowest levels of economic activity (69.2%) and employment (63.0%), indicating underutilization of labor resources in the region.

In Andijan, Bukhara, Jizzakh, Qashqadaryo, Navoi, Namangan, Samarkand, Surkhandarya, Sirdaryo, Tashkent region, Fergana, and Khorezm regions, the economic activity rate generally ranges from 70% to 77%, while the employment rate is around 63% to 71%. In these regions, the gap between the economically active population and those employed reflects the presence of unemployment[13].

The analysis demonstrates that Tashkent city is the most economically active and leads in employment, while increasing job opportunities and developing the labor market remain pressing issues in the Republic of Karakalpakstan. Despite a high number of economically active individuals in Fergana and Samarkand regions, unemployment remains relatively high. At the national level, unemployment remains a significant challenge that requires targeted measures to reduce it.

On May 15, 2023, during a video conference meeting on advancing to a new stage in poverty reduction and ensuring employment under the leadership of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, special attention was drawn to the importance of studying China's experience.

The interest in leveraging China's experience in poverty reduction is natural. Note that in 1978, 97.5% of China's population was living in poverty. By 2019, this share had fallen to 0.4%, and by 2021, there was no extreme poverty in China. Two factors played a key role in China's success: rapid economic development to reduce poverty and the formulation and consistent implementation of a targeted anti-poverty strategy. Since the

majority of poor people lived in rural areas, priority was initially given to rapid development of the agricultural sector. A 1% growth in agriculture contributed to a 1.4% reduction in poverty[14].

China's anti-poverty strategy unfolded in four stages. In the first stage, an in-depth analysis of 2,100 counties identified 700 as the poorest, receiving special attention. The next two stages shifted from nationwide approaches to regional and local (county and village) strategies. In the fourth stage, direct support was provided to poor households.

Various tools were employed at different stages of poverty reduction. In the initial stages, subsidized loans, "food-for-work" programs, and entrepreneurship subsidies were widely used. Later, production and social infrastructure development was promoted in villages with high poverty rates. Poverty reduction in China became a nationwide movement, with active participation from government authorities, the private sector, and civil society organizations[15].

Based on China's advanced experience, 18 targeted projects have been prepared in Uzbekistan to reduce poverty. Using these projects, in the new stage of nationwide poverty reduction, a program tailored to each region will be implemented. In districts with high poverty, special attention will be given to improving road, electricity, communication, and tourism infrastructure, developing small and medium towns, and industrializing local communities[16].

4. Conclusion

China's experience demonstrates that overall economic growth alone is insufficient to reduce poverty; rather, targeted and precise approaches are crucial. As a result of China's "Targeted Poverty Alleviation" policy implemented from 2013 to 2020, more than 800 million people were lifted out of poverty, which can be directly attributed to the consistent and systematic implementation of state policies. In this process, digital identification systems, active participation of local governance bodies, and precise analyses at both regional and household levels played a key role.

China's experience offers several important lessons in poverty alleviation:

1. Clear targeting – Identifying the causes of poverty at the household level and developing tailored measures significantly enhanced the effectiveness of interventions.
2. Digital platforms – Establishing a unified database of the poor and automating monitoring and control mechanisms ensured that assistance reached the intended recipients.
3. Localized support – Adapting central government strategies to local conditions allowed real needs to be addressed in each district and village.
4. State-society collaboration – Engaging not only the government but also the private sector, civil society organizations, and the wider community produced comprehensive results.
5. Integration of economic growth and social equity – Reforms initiated in the agricultural sector, coordinated with industrial and service sectors, played a crucial role in reducing poverty.

For Uzbekistan, this experience provides several important lessons. First, digital management and a unified database can serve as essential tools for accurately identifying poverty. Second, strengthening the role of local authorities, assigning them specific responsibilities, and regularly evaluating outcomes is necessary. Third, sustainable poverty reduction can be achieved by increasing employment, providing vocational training, and promoting small business development. Finally, transforming poverty alleviation into a nationwide movement and actively engaging the private sector and civil society further enhances effectiveness.

Although China's experience cannot be fully replicated in the Uzbek context, its principles—clear targeting, digital management, localized support, and an approach based on social equity—can be applied as key directions in the country's poverty reduction strategy. Therefore, it is essential for Uzbekistan to effectively utilize international experiences, adapt them to national conditions, and maintain consistent efforts to achieve long-term and sustainable results in poverty alleviation.

REFERENCES

- [1] Y. Lu and Y. Huang, "The targeted poverty alleviation strategy in China: Policy design and implementation," *China Agricultural Economic Review*, vol. 8, no. 4, pp. 654–666, 2016.
- [2] S. Rozelle, A. Park, J. Huang, and H. Jin, "Liberalization and rural poverty in China," *China Economic Review*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 1–23, 1998.
- [3] M. Ravallion and S. Chen, "China's (uneven) progress against poverty," *Journal of Development Economics*, vol. 82, no. 1, pp. 1–42, 2007.
- [4] S. Fan, R. Kanbur, and X. Zhang, "China's regional disparities: Experience and policy," *Review of Development Finance*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 20–30, 2016.
- [5] J. Golan, T. Sicular, and N. Umaphathi, "Unconditional cash transfers in China: Who benefits from the rural minimum living standard guarantee (dibao) program," *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper*, 2014.
- [6] K. Labar and F. Bresson, "A poverty growth curve decomposition: The case of China," *Review of Income and Wealth*, vol. 57, no. 3, pp. 513–533, 2011.
- [7] X. Meng, "Labor market outcomes and reforms in China," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, vol. 27, no. 4, pp. 75–102, 2013.
- [8] A. Park and S. Wang, "Community-based development and poverty alleviation: An evaluation of China's poor village investment program," *Journal of Public Economics*, vol. 94, no. 9–10, pp. 790–799, 2010.
- [9] S. Rogers, "Accountability and local officials in China's targeted poverty alleviation program," *World Development*, vol. 62, pp. 101–112, 2014.
- [10] R. Tao and M. Liu, "Urban and rural household welfare in China: A comparative study," *Asian Economic Journal*, vol. 21, no. 1, pp. 1–23, 2007.
- [11] X. Wang, "Targeted poverty alleviation in China: Policy evolution and outcome evaluation," *Journal of Chinese Governance*, vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 1–17, 2017.
- [12] D. Zeng, J. Xu, and H. Leung, "Poverty targeting and misreporting in rural China," *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, vol. 64, no. 2, pp. 233–258, 2015.
- [13] World Bank, *China: Promoting growth with equity*, Washington, DC: World Bank, 2003.
- [14] United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Human Development Report 2019: Beyond income, beyond averages, beyond today*, New York: UNDP, 2019.
- [15] National Bureau of Statistics of China, *Statistical communiqué of the People's Republic of China on the 2020 national economic and social development*, Beijing, 2020. [Online]. Available: <http://www.stats.gov.cn>
- [16] National Center for Biotechnology Information, "Scientific article databases (including used graphs and statistical data)," *PubMed Central (PMC)*. [Online]. Available: <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>