

The Road to Wealth from “Dry Beach” to “Golden Beach”-- Ningxia’s “Xihaigu” Region’s High-Quality Development Effectiveness Study

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Abstract: The report of the twentieth CPC National Congress points out that “To build a modern socialist country in all respects, we must, first and foremost, pursue high-quality development”, and that “the most arduous and burdensome task in the comprehensive construction of a modernized socialist country remains in the countryside”. The “Xihaigu” region of Ningxia, which was once recognized by the United Nations as “unsuitable for human survival”, has taken a smooth path in comprehensively promoting high-quality development. Based on the field survey and research of seven villages in five counties in Ningxia, this paper summarizes the five major achievements of the “Xihaigu” region of Ningxia in comprehensively implementing the new development philosophy and comprehensively promoting high-quality development, analyzes the four major problems that need to be solved in the stage of comprehensively promoting high-quality development, and puts forward the optimized direction of comprehensively promoting high-quality development, consolidating and expanding the results of poverty alleviation, and realizing the development of high-quality rural industries.

Keywords: High-Quality Development; New Development Philosophy; Xihaigu

1. Introduction

The report of the 20th CPC National Congress pointed out that “To build a modern socialist country in all respects, we must, first and foremost, pursue high-quality development”, and “the most arduous and burdensome task of comprehensively building a socialist modernized country is still in the countryside”. To strengthen the country, we must first strengthen agriculture, and only when agriculture is strong can the country be strong. 2023 Document No. 1 of the Central Committee emphasized the need to “consolidate and expand the achievements of poverty alleviation” and “promote the high-quality development of rural industries”. The Program for the Construction of Standard System for Promoting High-Quality Development of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region (2021-2025) explicitly proposes to build an ecological environmental protection system, an advantageous agricultural standard system and a modern service industry standard system for the development of Ningxia in the new era, which not only points out the way forward for the high-quality development of Ningxia, but also reflects the importance that the Party and the state attach to the high-quality development of Ningxia’s economy. attention.

The objective of this study is to comprehensively summarize the accomplishments and experiences in promoting high-quality development in Ningxia, while also offering valuable insights for other provinces and cities. Moreover, this article presents future optimization directions based on the concept of high-quality development, providing reference suggestions for consolidating and expanding poverty alleviation achievements as well as achieving high-quality rural industrial development within the research area.

2. Five major achievements in comprehensively promoting high-quality development

2.1 Innovation: Culture and Tourism Integration, a “New Opportunity” for Three Industries to Lead and Boost Regional Development

Located at the base of Liupan Mountain, Laoxiangzi Folk Culture Village served as a venue for pre-enemy meetings held by the Red Army in the past. The local villagers primarily rely on agriculture for their livelihoods; however, their income remains relatively low. Recognizing the abundant red cultural resources within this region, Longde County government has proactively responded by implementing a series of measures aimed at “cultural tourism poverty alleviation.” Firstly, traditional buildings in Laoxiangzi have been meticulously renovated and repaired while preserving their original architectural style. Secondly, professional tourism companies have been engaged to strategize and

develop distinctive cultural tourism products. Lastly, villagers are encouraged to actively participate in tourism service construction through financial support amounting to 50,000 RMB per household. This assistance aids them in transforming their residences into culturally themed homestays and facilitates the development of agritourism activities.

In terms of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, relevant departments have successfully overcome challenges by engaging with artisans and inheritors of intangible cultural heritage crafts, thereby fostering the establishment of Laoxiangzi Folk Culture Village renowned for its rich cultural legacy. Laoxiangzi Folk Culture Village actively cultivates a culturally immersive tourist destination that stimulates local industries such as homestays and catering establishments while expediting rural revitalization endeavors. Local operators of homestay accommodations can generate annual earnings reaching tens of thousands, whereas agritourism contributes up to 300 thousand yuan per year to farmhouse restaurants.

2.2 Coordination: Collaboration between Fujian and Ningxia, a “centering pill” for small and micro-enterprises to empower high-quality development

In 1998, the third joint meeting between Fujian and Ningxia on poverty alleviation cooperation reached an agreement to foster labor-intensive and resource development-oriented agricultural products processing projects in Ningxia through industrial collaboration. This initiative aimed to uplift thousands of households from poverty. The Institute of Mushroom Grass Research at Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University dispatched technical experts to Ningxia for imparting mushroom grass technology, thereby establishing edible mushroom demonstration sites across eight counties including Pengyang and Yanchi. Consequently, mushroom grass emerged as a significant source of augmented income through scientific advancements for impoverished regions in Ningxia. The government of Ningxia has prioritized supporting a cluster of small-scale and micro enterprises while fostering characteristic ventures with a certain scale capable of generating employment opportunities for local residents. Tuoxian, a prominent figure in Yuanlong Village who is now 30 years old, heeded the call of his hometown government and returned to establish a modern spicy strip production factory. With an annual income of 4 million yuan (about \$620,000) and providing employment opportunities for over 200 locals, Tuoxian’s business venture exemplifies the deep friendship fostered through Fujian-Ningxia cooperation - akin to a “heart-stabilizing pill” on Ningxia’s path towards high-quality development.

2.3 Green: Eco-development, a “new path” to high-quality development in the mountainous regions of the West

High-quality development should be guided by the new development philosophy. Clean waters and green mountains are just as valuable as gold and silver. With the “two mountains theory” as a guide, Guyuan Pengyang County vigorously protect the ecological environment, through the top of the Liangxuan grass irrigation green integrated three-dimensional construction model, the lower part of the slope of the arable land to build high-standard horizontal terraces, dry, branch, hairy ditch construction of silt dams, ponds, valley and appropriate development of ditch and dam land; at the same time, vigorously develop the eco-economy, due to the local suitable Cultivation of red plum apricot and other crops, so that Pengyang “red plum apricot” famous in Ningxia; planting chrysanthemum, Chaihu and other medicinal herbs, the development of traditional Chinese medicine processing industry, as well as tea processing.

Minning Town, the past barren “dry beach”, now become rich “golden beach”. Leland Winery, for example, Minning Town, climate conditions are very suitable for grape growth, but the soil in the stone, difficult to plow. The local soil improvement work by digging soil ditches about 70 cm deep and then filling them with organic fertilizers has changed the soil environment and gradually formed a characteristic planting mainly for wine grape planting. Leland Winery, as the earliest group of enterprises involved in the ecological protection work in Minning Town, has also enjoyed great ecological dividends. With the high quality of local wine grapes, the wines of the enterprise have won many international awards such as the gold medal of Brussels Wine Competition. Both Panyang County and Minning Township of Yongning County are in ecologically fragile areas, and they have adhered to the new development philosophy and come out with a unique green development path.

2.4 Openness: market-oriented, trade and culture to promote high-quality development of the “connecting belt”

In the 21st century, Ningxia has prioritized the promotion of comprehensive village development and adopted a “project + households” approach to concentrate resources for poverty alleviation projects under the “Thousand Villages Poverty Alleviation and Development” in-

initiative, thereby expediting poverty reduction in disadvantaged regions. Local governments actively explore distinctive industries, establish scalable and promising collective industry systems, extensively engage residents' participation, and attract a substantial number of talented individuals. In Maojiagou Village of Xiji County in Ningxia, cattle farms have emerged on the flat plateau. According to cattle farmers, the government proactively implements inclusive financial policies by providing low-interest or even interest-free loans to support villagers' entrepreneurial endeavors. They also place significant emphasis on providing technical training for livestock breeders, enabling entrepreneurial villagers to truly benefit from policy incentives. Moreover, technological advancements are highly valued in the region, with companies like Benwang Ecological Agriculture Co., Ltd. leading the way in cultivating exceptional products such as "He Niu." These products exhibit outstanding breed characteristics, including short growth cycles and superior meat quality. This industry represents just one of the distinctive sectors thriving in the Minning region. Supported by the Minning cooperation model, it demonstrates a promising development trajectory that effectively motivates and attracts local residents to actively participate. Consequently, this sector injects a stable and reliable impetus into promoting high-quality development throughout Ningxia region.

2.4 Sharing: collective industry, the people's concerted efforts to move towards common prosperity "cardiotonic agent"

In the twenty-first century, Ningxia has taken the whole-village promotion and the "project+farmer" approach as its entry point, concentrating its human, material and financial resources on the comprehensive implementation of poverty-alleviation projects such as the "Thousand Villages Poverty Alleviation and Development" project, which has accelerated the process of lifting the poor out of poverty in poverty-stricken areas and among the impoverished population. Local governments have been actively engaged in digging out local characteristic industries, creating a number of characteristic collective industries with systematic scale and development potential, greatly mobilizing the enthusiasm of local residents, and attracting many local talents to join them.

In the village of Maojiagou, Xiji County, Ningxia, large and small beef cattle farms have risen up on the flat surface of the plateau. According to the cattle farmers, the government will implement the financial inclusion policy, provide low-interest or even interest-free loans to help villagers start their own business, and pay attention to the technical training for the farmers, so that entrepreneurial villagers can enjoy the real policy dividends. At the same time, the enterprises represented by Ningxia Benwang Ecological Agriculture Co., Ltd. attach importance to the use of science and technology, and have cultivated a number of high-quality breeds of "Wagyu Cattle" with delicious meat and short development cycle, which promote the Ningxia beef cattle breeding industry to the direction of scaling up, technologization and industrialization. Development. This kind of industry is only a representative of the characteristic industry in Fujian-Ningxia area, and with the support of Fujian-Ningxia cooperation mode, the development trend of the industry is good, which greatly encourages and attracts local people to join, and gives a shot of "cardiotonic agent" for the quality development of Ningxia area.

3. Comprehensively promote high-quality development urgently need to solve four major problems

3.1 Local development concepts are "not new enough"

Behind the development is not only the innovation of the industry, but also the innovation of the concept. The ever-expanding scale of rural tourism has provided a strong development impetus for rural revitalization. The report of the 20th CPC National Congress points out that we should "insist on shaping tourism with culture and emphasizing culture with tourism, and promote the deep integration and development of culture and tourism". The integration of culture and tourism emphasizes complementary industrial innovation, which is a systematic and all-round integration process. At this stage, the rural culture and tourism integration perspective is more narrow, the content is more single. The main manifestation of the phenomenon of homogenization of scenic spots is more serious, the lack of innovative spirit, while the tourism infrastructure is more backward, difficult to meet the diversified needs of tourists.

On the other hand, the villagers of small and medium-sized enterprises to create the development of creative curing, the lack of innovative ideas, independent problem-solving ability is insufficient. Tourism industry has a "one industry, a hundred industry" characteristics. And

when a market has tended to saturation, to have new development requires new ideas.

3.2 Commodity factor components “do not flow”

In the process of regional promotion of high-quality development, there are difficulties in the poor flow of commodity factor resources due to the uneven distribution of resources and imbalance in their allocation, the phenomenon of local protection and market segmentation. In a single supply environment, it is difficult to sell high-quality commodities and expensive to produce raw materials. Beef cattle in Ningxia is of excellent quality and is a characteristic breeding industry in Ningxia. In 2020, the beef cattle industry was included in the implementation program for the high-quality development of nine key industries in the autonomous region. As for Maojiagou Village in Xiji County, the overall demand for local beef cattle is small in volume, low in price and poor in sales. In addition to facing sales problems, rising production costs also plagued local farmers.

3.3 Regional specialty brands “do not start”

Brand is an important symbol of high-quality development, and strengthening brand building is an important way to meet the people's needs for a better life. The survey shows that there are numerous cultural and natural resources of rural characteristics, but the awareness of brand building in the process of industrial development is weak, and the products of rural characteristics created are either lack of characteristics or have low added value, with overall competitiveness not strong and poor brand benefits. The scale of specialty industries has been difficult to expand, and some have even been gradually shut down. The endogenous driving force of industrial development is not enough, not to mention the formation of specialty brands. The reason for this is, on the one hand, their own production technology is weak, to create a unique product is unable to compare with the city's large-scale production, and at the same time, the connotation and value of the cultural resources itself is not enough to explore, digging is not deep. On the other hand, the brand publicity is small, the market competitiveness is low, and it is difficult to make the specialty industry bigger and stronger.

4. Optimized direction for comprehensively contributing to high-quality development

4.1 Ideology: Realize the co-creation of host and guest values

In the era of continuous development of rural tourism, the interaction between customers and hosts has become more frequent, the mechanism of value co-creation between customers and hosts has been deepened, and the needs of customers have been expanding. The development of rural tourism destinations should be changed from being oriented to the provision of products by a single tourism service provider to being oriented to the co-creation of value by customers and service providers, specifically from the consciousness level and the technical level.

Consciousness level emphasizes the innovation in thinking and the discovery of creativity. Under the host-customer value co-creation mechanism, the provision of local services can no longer be limited to the supply of a single product, but should emphasize the participation of tourists, so that tourists are involved in the whole process of product design, production, consumption, marketing and management. Tourism service places can be attracted through the net red experience card and other forms, to share the real experience of tourists as an important means of marketing.

The development of new technology provides technical conditions for the co-creation of host-guest value. The “three micro and one end” in the context of integrated media has changed the traditional media one-to-many unidirectional information output. The way. In the context of WeChat, Jitterbug and other tourists' self-media boom to the cultural and tourism industry to bring the impact of the background, embrace the new technology is the general trend.

4.2 Market building: promoting the combination of efficient markets and responsive government

The Fifth Plenary Session of the Nineteenth CPC Central Committee proposed that it is essential to adhere to and refine the fundamental socialist economic system, fully unleash the decisive role of the market in resource allocation, optimize the utilization of governmental functions, and foster a more harmonious integration between an efficient market mechanism and a capable government. Facilitating such syn-

ergy between an effective market and a responsive government will contribute to further enhancing the seamless flow of commodity factor resources.

On one hand, the government is prioritizing traditional market development by initiating the establishment of distinctive local trading markets in villages with lower levels of marketization, while actively engaging in effective market promotion efforts. They are encouraging and guiding farmers to utilize market services to enhance their income generation and achieve prosperity. Simultaneously, they are diligently carrying out market supervision activities to strengthen market integrity, ensuring fair competition and establishing exemplary branded trading markets within individual households. On the other hand, as a complementary approach, the government is leveraging modern tools to deepen information technology infrastructure within the marketplace. By actively utilizing contemporary e-commerce platforms, they aim to invigorate micro-level economic activity within the market and explore novel avenues for assisting farmers in augmenting their income streams. Focus on supporting the establishment of an e-commerce brand comparable to Minning's "clever daughter-in-law," aiming to expand the traditional market-oriented scope and encompass a wider range of trading entities.

4.3 Industry Cultivation: Promoting the Modernization of Agricultural Scale

Promote the scale of agriculture, modernization is the trend of modern agricultural development. The scale of traditional agriculture is also conducive to improving the bargaining power of agricultural products, and improve the income of agricultural products. At the same time, to solve the rural development process, the characteristics of the industry due to technology, manpower and other reasons difficult to do bigger and stronger predicament.

Promote rural large-scale operation, the construction of special brands, need to cultivate new agricultural management main body, guide and encourage farmers to "family farms" "agricultural cooperatives" in the form of participation in agricultural production, improve the quality of their own agricultural products, and consolidate the brand construction of the The foundation of brand building. At the same time, the construction of special brands also need to improve the agricultural socialized service system, promote agricultural products e-commerce platform, land trusteeship and other agricultural socialized service organizations to solve the problem of agricultural products sales.

4.4 Innovative models: promoting a three-dimensional resource utilization model for land space

The problem of utilizing land resources in Ningxia lies in coordinating the relationship between protection and development. Green mountains can become gold mountains, lies in the efficient utilization of ecological resources, to convert the traditional perspective of land resources plane utilization to land space three-dimensional resources perspective. Resource utilization of land, not stop at the land, to focus on the overall use of ecological resources, do a good job of mountain, water, field, forest, lake and grass integrated system planning.

Minning Town, the original Long village in the face of the land problem will be the land and the upper light and heat conditions linked to the use of photovoltaic panels to absorb sunlight, the use of land resources breeding cattle and sheep, forming a unique "photovoltaic sheep" model for the Ningxia livestock and photovoltaic industry to provide a combination of a new way of thinking. Comprehensive planning and utilization of ecological resources with a holistic perspective requires the integrated development of agriculture and other industries.

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