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# Work Effectiveness, Problems and Countermeasures of Third-Party Assessment Teams from Colleges and Universities for Targeted Poverty Alleviation

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**Abstract** Conducting a third-party assessment on targeted poverty alleviation can effectively avoid the disadvantage that local government plays as both athlete (*i. e.* performer of poverty alleviation work) and referee (*i. e.* referee for poverty alleviation effect) in poverty alleviation to ensure the truth of poverty alleviation, and therefore, it is an important part of the work to win the battle against poverty. Since 2016, the third-party assessment teams from colleges and universities for targeted poverty alleviation have achieved good results and performance in the assessment on both the effectiveness of targeted poverty alleviation work and the exit of poor counties in China, and they have made due contributions to the cause of poverty alleviation. However, as a new thing, third-party assessment obviously has some problems, mainly including the following: subjective understanding on the long-term nature of rural poverty alleviation is insufficient, and there is a lack of long-term considerations and related mechanism for third-party assessment; affected by policies and institutions, most of the existing third-party assessment teams from colleges and universities have not regarded third-party assessment of targeted poverty alleviation as a cause, and they lack the motivation to actively study the assessment business; and the third-party assessment staff from colleges and universities for targeted poverty alleviation have low stability and high mobility, not conducive to the long-term construction of assessment teams. In order to establish long-term poverty alleviation and prevention mechanisms, these issues must be addressed squarely and relevant countermeasures need to be taken actively to effectively build a long-term mechanism for building third-party assessment teams from colleges and universities for targeted poverty alleviation.

**Key words** Targeted poverty alleviation, Third-party assessment, Team from college and university, Work effectiveness, Existing problem, Countermeasure

## 1 Introduction

Since the proposal of the goal of eradicating poverty in all its forms and manifestations in UN's *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* in September, 2015<sup>[1]</sup>, the Chinese government timely formulated the *China's National Plan on Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*<sup>[2]</sup>, which proposed the Chinese program for targeted poverty alleviation<sup>[2-4]</sup>. The *Decision of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council on Winning the Tough Battle against Poverty* (Zhong Fa [2015] No. 34) and *Poverty Alleviation Plan for the 13th Five-Year Plan Period* clearly set out the overall goal of poverty alleviation: by 2020, rural people have no worry about food and clothing and have access to compulsory education, basic medical services and safe housing (referred to as "two cares and three guarantees"), to ensure that the poor in rural areas are lifted out of poverty under the current standards in China and address regional overall poverty<sup>[3-4]</sup>. This goal program is 10 years ahead of the poverty alleviation goal in the UN's *2030 Agenda*, and reflects the targetedness of poverty alleviation and the multidimensional nature of poverty alleviation standards<sup>[5]</sup>. In order to achieve this ambitious goal and enable

the achievements of targeted poverty alleviation to stand the test of history, China has introduced and promoted a third-party assessment system for poverty alleviation<sup>[6-8]</sup>. This is a major decision of the Party Central Committee and the State Council, and is also a major innovation in China's targeted poverty alleviation work. It will surely be included in the history books of poverty alleviation and development in China, and has very significant practical significance for promoting the targeted poverty alleviation work in China. Third-party assessment of targeted poverty alleviation is also an important achievement of the battle against poverty, and it is an important part of China's poverty alleviation archives.

In the national third-party assessment of targeted poverty alleviation, the so-called third-party is an external force relative to the central government as a policy maker and local government as a policy executor. It mainly includes three parts: colleges and universities, scientific research institutions and related social organizations. By giving full play to the advantages of third-party assessment teams, *i. e.*, independence, objectivity, impartiality and science, local government can be effectively avoided from being both athlete (performer of poverty alleviation work) and referee (referee for poverty alleviation effect) to ensure the truth of poverty alleviation, so that the achievements of targeted poverty alleviation can stand the historical test<sup>[9]</sup> and the grand goal of "not leaving one behind the well-off road" proposed by General Secretary Xi Jinping can be really achieved.

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At present, third-party assessment of targeted poverty alleviation in China includes two categories: the first is the third-party assessment of the effectiveness of targeted poverty alleviation work, and the other is withdrawal of poor counties from the third-party assessment. Judging from the practice of third-party assessment on the effectiveness of national-level targeted poverty alleviation work in recent years, the basic organizational form is to entrust the Institute of Geographical Sciences and Natural Resources Research of the Chinese Academy of Sciences to organize teachers and students of relevant universities in China to form third-party assessment teams for the effectiveness of targeted poverty alleviation by province under the leadership of the Poverty Alleviation Office of the State Council, in order to conduct third-party assessment for 22 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities) in the central and western regions of China. As far as withdrawal of poor counties from third-party assessment, the current organizational form is that the Poverty Alleviation Office of the State Council and the poverty alleviation offices of various provinces (autonomous regions, municipalities directly under the central government) entrust relevant universities and research institutions across China to conduct third-party investigation and assessment under the leadership of the Poverty Alleviation Office of the State Council. Overall, at present, the main force of third-party assessment for targeted poverty alleviation in China is the teacher and student steams from colleges and universities. From the assessment practice in 2016 to the present, the third-party assessment teams from colleges and universities for targeted poverty alleviation have achieved good achievements and performance in both the assessment on effectiveness of targeted poverty alleviation work and the assessment on withdrawal of poor counties in China, making due contribution to poverty alleviation. However, it should be also noted that third-party assessment, as a new thing, also obviously has some problems. In order to establish long-term poverty alleviation and prevention mechanism, we should address these issues squarely, actively take relevant measures, and effectively build a long-term and sustainable mechanism for building third-party assessment teams from colleges and universities for targeted poverty alleviation.

## 2 Work situation, achievements and effectiveness of third-party assessment teams from colleges and universities for targeted poverty alleviation in the past four years

### 2.1 National targeted poverty alleviation work

In February, 2016, the Article 6 of the *Measures for Provincial Party Committees and Governments for Poverty Alleviation and Development Work* (Ting Zi [2016] No. 6) issued by the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and General Office of the State Council stipulates that third-party assessment is that the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development entrusts relevant scientific research institutions and social organizations to adopt special surveys, sampling surveys, field inspections, *etc.* to

assess the relevant indicators<sup>[6]</sup>. The assessment indicators are determined as accuracy rate of identification of poor, accuracy rate of withdrawal of poor and satisfaction of masses for poverty alleviation. In May, 2016, the Poverty Alleviation Office of the State Council issued the *Notice of the Poverty Alleviation Office of the State Council on Carrying out Third-party Assessment on Effectiveness of Targeted Poverty Alleviation Work*. For the first time, the accuracy rate of identification of poor, the accuracy rate of withdrawal of poor, and the satisfaction of masses for poverty alleviation in 22 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities) in the central and western regions of China in 2015 were assessed. Simultaneously, three counties (Fuping County of Hebei Province, Midu County of Yunnan Province and Pengyang County of Ningxia) were selected to conduct a census on the population that had been lifted out of poverty in 2015. The State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development entrusted the Institute of Geographic Sciences and National Resources Research of the Chinese Academy of Sciences to organize 33 survey and assessment teams, which adopted special surveys, sampling surveys, field inspections, *etc.* to conduct a third-party assessment on the effectiveness of targeted poverty alleviation work in 22 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities) in the central and western regions of China in 2015 from late May, 2016. Among the 33 survey and assessment teams, 28.5 of them were from colleges and universities (the Xinjiang survey and assessment team was composed of people from Xinjiang University and the Institute of Geographical Sciences and National Resources Research of Chinese Academy of Sciences), accounting for 86.36% of the total number of national survey and assessment teams (33). A total of 113 counties were sampled in this assessment, and the third-party assessment teams from colleges and universities were responsible for field surveys and assessments of 94 counties, accounting for 83.19% of the total counties in the survey and assessment.

Since then, third-party assessment on the effectiveness of poverty alleviation and development work in the previous year has been conducted every January to February. The organizational form is all that the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development entrusts the Institute of Geographical Sciences and National Resources Research of Chinese Academy of Sciences to organize survey and assessment teams for the provinces. The participants are dominated by colleges and universities. For the third-party assessment on the effectiveness of poverty alleviation and development in 22 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities) in 2016 conducted in January – February of 2017, a total of 22 field survey and assessment teams were organized, of which 21 survey and assessment teams were from colleges and universities; a total of 117 counties were surveyed (covering more than 20 000 households), of which 113 counties were surveyed and assessed by the third-party assessment teams from colleges and universities. For the third-party assessment on the effectiveness of poverty alleviation and development in 22 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities) in 2017 conducted in

January – February of 2018, a total of 22 field survey and assessment teams were organized, of which 21 survey and assessment teams were from colleges and universities; and a total of 95 counties were surveyed and assessed, of which 91 counties were surveyed and assessed by the third-party assessment teams from colleges and universities.

In addition to the assessment on the effectiveness of national poverty alleviation and development work, the provincial and municipal (prefectural) governments have also organized annual assessments on the effectiveness of poverty alleviation and development work.

Judging from the results submitted by the third-party assessment on the effectiveness of national poverty alleviation and development work, the main result is assessment reports, including *Third-party Assessment Report on Effectiveness of Targeted Poverty Alleviation in 22 Central and Western Provinces* (simplified and complete versions), *Third-party Assessment Report on Effectiveness of Targeted Poverty Alleviation in Each of the 22 Central and Western Provinces* (simplified and complete versions), database of questionnaires for farmers, and check information tablets for problematic households (wrongly assessed, omitted and wrongly withdrawn).

After four years of exploration and practice, the third-party assessment on the effectiveness of targeted poverty alleviation has gradually matured, its role has also become increasingly prominent, and it has played an important role in determining the situation of poverty alleviation, deploying measures to combat poverty and improving the quality of poverty alleviation of the CPC Central Committee. First, the direction of targeted poverty alleviation has been further clarified. Second, the responsibility to fight poverty has been further consolidated. Third, the prominent problems in poverty alleviation (especially the "three guarantees" and the short board of safe drinking water) in some places have been solved. Fourth, the quality of poverty alleviation has been further improved, manifested by that the number of households with identification and withdrawal problems found in third-party assessment has decreased significantly year by year, and the number of people returning to poverty has been decreasing year by year. Fifth, the style of fighting poverty has been further changed, the ability to overcome poverty has been significantly improved, the assistance work in villages has been more solid, the effectiveness of assistance has been continuously shown, and the satisfaction of the people has increased year by year.

**2.2 Withdrawal work of poor counties** In April, 2016, the General Office of the Central Committee of CPC and the General Office of the State Council issued the *Opinions on Establishing a Mechanism for Withdrawing from Poverty* (Ting Zi[2016]No. 6), which clearly stipulates to implement targeted poverty alleviation in depth, establish a strict, standardized and transparent poverty withdrawal mechanism based on effectiveness of poverty alleviation and approval of the public, and promote the orderly withdrawal of poor people, poor villages and poor counties by 2020, ensuring

that poverty alleviation goal is achieved on schedule. To ensure that the achievements of poverty alleviation are real and credible and poverty alleviation is targeted, it is needed to organize a third-party assessment on the effectiveness of poverty alleviation and the withdrawal from poverty<sup>[7]</sup>. In October, 2016, the General Office of the Central Committee of CPC and the General Office of the State Council issued the *Implementation Measures for the Responsibility System for Poverty Alleviation*, which requires that poverty alleviation should be in accordance with the working mechanism of coordination by central government, in charge by each province and implementation by cities and counties in the province, and a responsibility system with clear responsibilities, each with its own responsibilities and joint efforts to tackle tough problems needs to be established. The Article 5 of the Chapter II Central Coordination specifically stipulates that the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development is responsible for the overall coordination of poverty alleviation efforts across China, the establishment and improvement of working mechanisms for effectiveness assessment of poverty alleviation, constraints on poor counties, inspections, and withdrawal from poverty, the organization and implementation of performance assessment of provincial party committees and governments for poverty alleviation and development work, and the organization of anti-poverty investigation and inspection and third-party assessment, and the relevant situation should be reported to the CPC Central Committee and the State Council<sup>[8]</sup>. Thus, China's policies and systems for poor counties' withdrawal from third-party assessment are established.

In January, 2017, for the first time, China launched the Special Assessment Trial Project for Withdrawal of Three Poor Counties, and three key poor counties (Lankao County of Henan Province, Jinggangshan City of Jiangxi Province and Luquan County of Yunnan Province) withdrew from the third-party assessment. Under the leadership of the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development, the Institute of Geographical Sciences and National Resources Research of Chinese Academy of Sciences organized three third-party assessment teams from three universities (Henan University, Nanchang University and Yunnan University of Finance and Economics) to specially complete the special assessment of the withdrawal of these three poor counties. The assessment indicators were determined as mistake withdrawal rate, omission rate, incidence rate of comprehensive poverty and degree of public acceptance. As a result of the assessment, Lankao County and Jinggangshan City met the state's requirements for withdrawal from poor counties, while Luquan County did not meet the withdrawal requirements of poor counties for its higher omission rate. In July-August of the same year, the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development organized the 2016 Withdrawal Trial Assessment and Inspection Project for Poor Counties (belonging to the second batch of withdrawal special assessment in 2016), and a total of 26 counties were assessed. In addition to the Institute of Geographical Sciences and National Resources Research of Chinese Academy of Sciences

which was responsible for quality control of withdrawal trial assessment and inspection of poor counties, there were 6 college teams responsible for field survey and assessment, accounting for 85.71% of the total number (7) of field survey and assessment teams, and the college teams were responsible for survey and assessment of 21 counties, accounting for 80.77% of the total counties (26). Based on this assessment, in September, 2017, the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development issued the *Implementation Measures for Withdrawal of Poor Counties from Special Assessment and Inspection (Trial)* (Guo Kai Ban Fa[2017]No.56), which clearly stipulates that the withdrawal of poor counties refers to the mistake rate, omission rate and degree of public acceptance, and the deployment of poverty alleviation, implementation of major policies and measures, improvement of infrastructure and public services, follow-up assistance plans, and work arrangements for consolidation should be inspected.

In June – August, 2018, a total of 125 counties passed the third-party assessment in the 2017 Withdrawal Special Assessment and Inspection Project for Poor Counties. More than 80% of the teams participating in the assessment came from colleges and universities. As of September, 2018, a total of 153 counties had been lifted out of poverty across China.

Since the second half of 2018, the CPC Central Committee has made major reforms on the poverty withdrawal mechanism. It is clarified that the special assessment and inspection work for the withdrawal of poor counties shall be organized and implemented unitedly by the provinces, which are also responsible for the withdrawal. At the national level, spot checks will be organized. From December, 2018, 22 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities in the central and western regions of China had conducted special assessments and inspections on 284 poor counties applying for withdrawal in 2018. Among them, 283 counties met the withdrawal requirements, and they were announced to be lifted out of poverty by the provincial people's governments by mid-May, 2019. Since late May, the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development initiated spot checks. Overall, for both provincial-level withdrawal special assessment and inspection of poor counties and national-level random inspection, the main body that actually undertook the field survey and assessment was third-party assessment teams from colleges and universities for targeted poverty alleviation.

Judging from the results submitted by the third-party assessment teams, the main result is the third-party assessment and inspection reports on withdrawal of poor counties (simplified and complete versions), database of questionnaires for farmers, and check information tablets for problematic households (wrongly assessed and wrongly withdrawn).

By conducting third-party assessment on withdrawal of poor counties, we have effectively ensured the truth of poverty alleviation, so that the achievements of poverty alleviation can stand the test of history and the decisive victory of China's fight against poverty is guaranteed.

### 3 Main problems in the third-party assessment teams from colleges and universities for targeted poverty alleviation

The achievement of effectiveness and display of role of third-party assessment in targeted poverty alleviation is the result of the wise leadership of the CPC Central Committee, is the result of the party committees and governments in various provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities) to pay close attention to implementation, is the result of careful organization by the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development, and it also embodies the wisdom, hard work and sweat of all third-party assessment fronts. Colleges and universities, as the main force for third-party assessment of targeted poverty alleviation, have played an important role in survey and assessment, but there are also some obvious issues that need to be addressed.

#### 3.1 Subjective understanding of the long-term nature of rural poverty alleviation is insufficient, and there is a lack of long-term consideration and related mechanisms for this emerging issue of third-party assessment

The third-party assessment of targeted poverty alleviation is a new thing that came into being with the implementation of China's targeted poverty alleviation strategy and a series of major policy documents such as the *Decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Winning the Tough Fight against Poverty*. In terms of time, the goal of China's poverty alleviation is to ensure that the rural poor will achieve comprehensive poverty alleviation under the current standards by 2020 and enter the well-off society together with the people of China. Most of the existing third-party assessment teams from colleges and universities for targeted poverty alleviation do not have specialized poverty alleviation research institutions, and they have no sufficient understanding on the long-term nature of rural poverty alleviation. As a result, third-party assessors from colleges and universities for targeted poverty alleviation tend to think that third-party assessment for targeted poverty alleviation is nothing more than "a gust of wind", and by the end of the fight against poverty in 2020, the focus of national policy will be shifted to the strategy of village revitalization, and thus, this "gust of wind" will end. Under such recognition, the ideological attention to the new thing of third-party assessment for targeted poverty alleviation is often not enough, long-term considerations are lacked, and only a little time is invested to think, study and explore. As a result, it is difficult to promote the further development and improvement of third-party assessment theories, methods and technologies for targeted poverty alleviation, let alone building long-term related mechanisms. Of course, this is also related to the fact that long-term mechanism and policy for poverty alleviation have not been clearly formulated at the national level.

#### 3.2 Affected by policies and institutions, the existing third-party assessment teams in colleges and universities are mostly considered as sideline or part-time work, lacking the motivation to actively study the assessment work

There is currently no special poverty alleviation major in colleges and universities.

Although there are adjacent disciplines, there are not many institutions and teachers and students specializing in poverty alleviation research. Under the influence of the national targeted poverty alleviation strategy and powerful policies, at present, the third-party assessment teams from colleges and universities for targeted poverty alleviation mainly participate in third-party assessment tasks based on "political significance", rather than thinking and studying from the perspective of disciplines and professions. Thus, their enthusiasm, initiative and creativity are often low. On the other hand, the main results of third-party assessment on targeted poverty alleviation are the assessment reports and related databases. These results are confidential, and generally they are not allowed to be written into papers for submission and publication. This is in conflict with the assessment policies and requirements for teachers and students in colleges and universities. In colleges and universities, at the end of every year, teachers must conduct annual assessment of teaching workload and scientific research workload. In particular, there are strict assessment requirements in publishing papers and monographs. For graduate students, there are also policies and requirements for writing and publishing papers. People cannot graduate without completing the corresponding publication requirements. In this policy context, if teachers and students in colleges and universities spend a lot of time and energy on the third-party assessment for targeted poverty alleviation and on-the-spot survey and assessment projects, they will have no enough time and energy to write and publish academic papers. The consequences can be imagined. Therefore, most of the existing third-party assessment teams from colleges and universities have difficulty in treating the third-party assessment for targeted poverty alleviation as a cause of their own, and often, third-party assessment for targeted poverty alleviation is regarded as a sideline or part-time work, and most of the assessors will not actively study and evaluate the assessment work.

### **3.3 The third-party assessment staff from colleges and universities for targeted poverty alleviation has low stability and high mobility, not conducive to the long-term construction of assessment teams**

For both assessment on effectiveness of poverty alleviation and development and assessment on withdrawal of poor counties in third-party survey and assessment for targeted poverty alleviation, the basic method is household survey, and the basic support is questionnaire, audio recording, video, photo, evidence collection, *etc.* to carry out households survey and relevant information collection for sampled farmers (including registered poor households and non-registered poor households). The survey of each household is carried out in groups (usually 2 people per group). Therefore, this is a "labor-intensive" technical job that requires a large number of staff. Judging from the third-part assessment practices in recent years, completing a small survey and assessment project for about 1 000 households generally requires about 50 teachers and students. Among them, 6 – 8 teachers act as team leaders, and the remaining 42 – 44 students (mainly graduate students) go into households for survey and assessment. At

present, the third-party assessment teams from colleges and universities are composed of teachers and students with various professional backgrounds. Although they have the advantages of flexibility and diversity, due to heavy teaching, research and learning tasks of teachers and students, third-party assessment work conflicts with the requirements of various professional courses and department affairs (especially the final exam). As a result, the members of the third-party assessment teams from colleges and universities for targeted poverty alleviation have been updated frequently, and the stability of the assessment teams cannot be guaranteed. Newcomers generally face problems such as inadequate experience and lack of ability to complete survey and assessment. The mobility of graduate students, the main force of household surveys, is greater. Conventionally, first-year graduate students are often busy with various courses, and they have difficulty in scheduling time to participate in third-party assessment, and third-year students are busy with graduation thesis research and writing, various employment examinations, *etc.*, and they also have no time to participate in third-party assessment. Relatively speaking, second-year graduate students are more flexible. However, as third-party assessment projects for targeted poverty alleviation often lack attractiveness due to limitations of the tasks and lack of long-term nature, many second-year graduate students are either unable or unwilling to participate in third-party assessment for targeted poverty alleviation, or sometimes, they leave just after participating in one (up to two) survey project. As survey and assessment personnel have low stability and high mobility, it is also difficult to invest sufficient time in assessment training, which affects the effectiveness of survey and assessment.

## **4 Suggestions on strengthening the construction of third-party assessment teams from colleges and universities for targeted poverty alleviation**

### **4.1 Fully understanding the long-term and complex nature of poverty and establishing a long-term mechanism for targeted poverty alleviation and prevention to further explore the establishment of a long-term construction mechanism for third-party assessment teams for targeted poverty alleviation**

Judging from the development process of countries in the world, "gap" is widely existed. As far as rural "poverty" is concerned, China's goal in fight against poverty is to "ensure that the rural poor in China achieve poverty alleviation under the current standard, all the poor counties are lifted out of poverty, and regional poverty is resolved" by 2020. The "current standard" is mainly to solve the problem of "absolute poverty" in rural areas. However, as poverty standards are different at different stages of development and in different contexts, this determines that poverty is a dynamic process and a long-standing topic<sup>[10]</sup>. Therefore, even if China completely solves the problem of "absolute poverty" under the current standard in 2020, the problem of relative poverty in rural areas after 2020 is bound to continue. In particular, the so-called "marginal population", which occupies a certain percentage in the

targeted poverty alleviation stage, is on the "marginal line" of poverty alleviation, and has not been included in registered poor population for targeted assistance, may easily become the new poor. At the same time, the situation in rural areas is more complicated. From time to time, some farmer households become poor or return to poverty due to many reasons such as low self-development ability, various accidents such as diseases, and natural disasters. Aiming at the dynamics of rural poverty, complexity of causes of poverty, differences in poverty types, and targeting of poverty alleviation measures, it is necessary to build a long-lasting targeted poverty alleviation mechanism from the aspects of poverty standards, poverty alleviation targets, poverty alleviation agencies, poverty alleviation enterprises or industries, and laws and regulations to make targeted poverty alleviation work on the track of standardization, institutionalization and legalization<sup>[11]</sup>.

Hebei Province formulated the *Guidance on Establishing a Targeted Poverty Prevention Mechanism*. Poverty prevention targeted will be reasonably designated across the province. Through the implementation of targeted poverty prevention measures, the problems of increasing poor population and returning to poverty have been solved, and a scientific and effective mechanism to prevent poverty has been established. The poverty prevention targets are divided into two groups<sup>[12]</sup>: non-poor low-income households which are not included within the scope of registered poverty-stricken households, do not enjoy poverty alleviation policies, and have lower incomes and high risk of returning to poverty, especially those who enjoy the basic living allowance and those in extreme poverty; and households that have been lifted out of poverty non-sustainably or stably, *i. e.*, poverty-free households with unstable poverty alleviation achievements and weak capabilities to increase income persistently and stably. This practice can be promoted and used for reference in other provinces.

At the national and provincial (autonomous region and municipality) levels, on the basis of building a long-term mechanism for targeted poverty alleviation and poverty prevention, it is recommended to actively explore the establishment of a long-term mechanism for building third-party assessment teams for targeted poverty alleviation, and effectively build stable third-party assessment teams for targeted poverty alleviation, laying the necessary basic support for the national and regional implementation of long-term targeted poverty alleviation and poverty prevention policies.

**4.2 Encouraging qualified colleges and universities to carry out in-depth research on poverty reduction and supporting the long-term construction of third-party assessment teams for targeted poverty alleviation** The foregoing indicates that building third-party assessment teams for targeted poverty alleviation is very important, and it is an important guarantee for the long-term effectiveness of targeted poverty alleviation now and in the future. From the third-party assessment practices for more than 4 years, we deeply feel that to build an excellent third-party assessment team for targeted poverty alleviation, to obtain excellent third-party assessment results of targeted poverty alleviation, and

to effectively promote the truth of poverty alleviation must treat the current "part-time" job of third-party assessment for targeted poverty alleviation as an important undertaking, instead of looking at it as a "part-time" job, must really invest a lot of time and energy, and deliberately study, explore and practice in order to achieve good results. To this end, the following suggestions were put forward.

First, the government's anti-poverty departments and university leaders actively encourage qualified universities to set up specialized research institutions in the field of poverty alleviation, carry out in-depth research on special topics in the field of poverty alleviation, including the exploration and research of the theory and methods of third-party assessment for targeted poverty alleviation, and produce more outstanding research results.

Second, there must be flexibility in the assessment policy for school scientific research workload, and priority should be given to third-party assessment for targeted poverty alleviation. In particular, the related results (*e. g.* third-party assessment reports) of third-party assessment teams which go to poor mountainous areas to conduct survey and assessment should be measured and verified as scientific research workload realistically, as they cannot be written into theses or monographs to publish as required, and a reasonable incentive mechanism should be established to encourage the sorting out of the third-party assessment results to effectively guarantee the long-term construction of third-party assessment teams for targeted poverty alleviation.

**4.3 Relatively stabilizing third-party assessment backbone for targeted poverty alleviation and creating conditions to regularly train the backbone of graduate students** First of all, qualified universities can train and build a group of relatively stable third-party assessment teachers for targeted poverty alleviation through relevant colleges or disciplines and specialized poverty alleviation research institutions. This is the core and foundation of the long-term construction of third-party assessment teams from colleges and universities for targeted poverty alleviation.

Second, in response to the problem that graduates, as the main body of third-party assessment teams, have low stability and high mobility, it is recommended that colleges and universities encourage and support the backbone teachers of third-party assessment teams for targeted poverty alleviation to set up elective courses for the graduates (the name of the courses can be Third-party Assessment for Targeted Poverty Alleviation or the relevant) and ensure that the courses can be set up every year, strengthen the training and examination system, and incorporate qualified members into the backbone team building<sup>[13]</sup>, in order to promote the regular training and stable construction of the backbone of third-party assessment graduates for targeted poverty alleviation.

In addition, the colleges and universities, departments, specialized poverty alleviation reach institutions and graduate backbone teams must fully understand the importance of participating in third-party survey and assessment for targeted poverty alleviation and their role in cultivating high-quality talents, and provide

