

# Equipping cities to cope with unprecedented urbanization

China is undergoing the largest scale of urbanization in its history at an unprecedented pace. During the past three decades, the share of China's population living in cities has more than doubled, reaching 46.6 percent in 2009. It is projected that this number will increase to about 64 percent by 2025, which translates to an annual urban population increase of about 17.7 million, equivalent to the population of the New York metropolitan area. Rapid urbanization has dramatically transformed China's socio-economic structure and has posed tremendous challenges to policymakers and practitioners, especially in secondary cities and lagging regions.

## Our approach

The World Bank Institute's (WBI's) Urban program in China aims to equip policymakers, municipal staff, and practitioners with cutting-edge knowledge and skills to address the various challenges of city management that accompany China's rapid urbanization. It includes a range of learning programs and strategic knowledge exchange initiatives.

## Our program

**Structured learning.** Building on the existing WBI curriculum and support from World Bank East Asia Region, WBI Urban Practice offers the following learning programs:

- *Sustainable Urban Development and Management* program strengthens professional skills of high-level city officials on key aspects of city management. This



includes spatial planning and land management; urban infrastructure finance; urban-rural linkages; metropolitan management; environmental management; disaster risk management; and climate resilience.

WBI developed this program jointly with the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development and the Chinese Academy of Governance (CAG, formerly China National School of Administration).

Delivered through the Global Development Learning Network and the Western China Development Distance Learning Network, the program has trained over 4,000 civil servants and professionals since 2001.

- In line with WBI's overall strategy of partnering with regional and national institutions for course development and delivery under the forthcoming World Bank E-Institute, WBI and Chinese Academy of Governance are jointly developing a new e-learning program

on *Modern City Management*. Through a series of courses, this program will introduce the latest innovations and good practices in urban management.

The first course, “Urban Planning: Coping with Emerging Challenges,” was piloted in 2010 and delivered to the network of provincial and municipal level administration schools through Chinese Academy of Governance’s new e-learning platform.

The second course, an adapted version of WBI’s global course “Sustainable Urban Land Use Planning,” is being developed in collaboration with Chinese Academy of Governance and the Urban Planning Society of China. This collaboration is expected to extend to other courses that will be offered by the E-Institute in the future.

- Through hands-on advisory support, WBI is also assisting our partners in improving its capacity to scale up training programs through modern pedagogical approaches and learning techniques, in order to meet the overwhelming demand for training local officials in China.

**Knowledge exchange.** WBI Urban Practice also facilitates South-South knowledge-sharing to foster a Community of Practice among urban practitioners and stakeholders from China and other countries. Activities in China include:

- Facilitate knowledge sharing among Chinese cities and among China and other countries through national practitioner networks. We have collaborated

with Urban Planning Society of China on the Annual Planning Conference, one of China’s largest urban events, to share knowledge and insights on cross-cutting urban themes (i.e. economic geography and climate change and cities) within a network of 20,000 Chinese urban practitioners.

- Organize international seminars in collaboration with China’s National Development and Reform Commission on strategic development issues and provided guidance to officials and planners who are responsible for developing China’s socio-economic five-year plans.
- During the World Expo Shanghai 2010, we partnered with the Expo Shanghai Committee and China’s National Development and Reform Commission on the international forum *Economic Transformations and Urban-Rural Relations* to facilitate knowledge exchange on the importance of urban-rural integration among a variety of key stakeholders.

### Our partners

- Chinese Academy of Governance
- National Development and Reform Commission Training Center
- Urban Planning Society of China
- Western China Development Distance Learning Network

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