

Industry Poverty Alleviation and Development in Continuous Destitute Areas: Based on the Status Analysis of the Wuling Mountains Region

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Abstract

As an effective way of poverty alleviation, the poverty alleviation through industry plays an important role in China's poverty alleviation and development career. After years of poverty alleviation and development, the industry poverty alleviation in Wuling Mountains has obtained certain achievements, but it still has some problems, such as unreasonable industrial structure, the limit of poverty alleviation's leading ability and so on. Based on the case study of the Wuling Mountains, this paper analyzes present situation and reasons of the industry poverty alleviation of the region, and puts forward some suggestions for poverty alleviation, such as strengthening regional government coordination, making the special advantage industries bigger and stronger, establishing demonstration zone of industry poverty alleviation, fostering leading enterprises vigorously and so on, which can provide decision support for the government at all levels to innovate the model of poverty alleviation and win the battle for the poverty alleviation in the new period.

Key words: Continuous destitute areas; Wuling Mountains; Industry poverty alleviation; Countermeasures

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INTRODUCTION

The "China's rural poverty alleviation and development program (2011-2020)" by the State Council has put forward that giving full play to the advantage of the ecological environment and natural resources of the poverty-stricken areas, and promoting advanced practical technologies to cultivate and strengthen characteristic pillar industries. The adjustment of industrial structure should be promoted, driving and helping poor peasant households to develop and product by poverty alleviation leading enterprises, professional co-operatives of farmers and mutual funds organization. Guiding and supporting enterprises to invest in the poor areas so as to drive poor peasant households to increase income" (Poverty Relief Office., 2011). Industry poverty alleviation is the inevitable requirement of the new round of poverty alleviation and development work in China, which aims to develop characteristic industry by relying on local resources endowment under the support of national policy and the impetus of external forces to drive the economic development, expand the productive employment opportunities and impel the poor people in poor areas to transform from "blood transfusion" to "blood creation", so as to shake off poverty. Continuous destitute areas in Wuling Mountainous Region includes eleven prefectures, autonomous regions, cities and seventy-one counties and districts across Chongqing City and provinces of

Hubei, Hunan and Guizhou. It is a combination of the old revolutionary base areas, ethnic minority areas and poor areas, which is a national-level destitute area with large border area, massive gathered minority and widespread poverty population. For a long time, due to the influence of geographical location, history and natural conditions, the industry development is lagged behind, the economic function is not strong and the task of poverty alleviation is still arduous in Wuling Mountainous Region. Regarding the Wuling Mountainous Region as the research object, this paper summarizes and combs the present situation of industry poverty alleviation, analyzes the existing problems and causes, and puts forward some countermeasures and suggestions by means of combining quantitative research and qualitative research, which can provide decision support for the governments at all levels to innovate the model of poverty alleviation and win the battle for the poverty alleviation in the new period.

1. DATA SOURCES

In August 2012, the Research Group “The study of model for inclusive growth of poverty alleviation in contiguous and concentrated poverty-stricken areas” —a key project of State Social Sciences Fund, investigated the Wuling Mountainous Region for a month. The baseline survey covered three provinces and one city of Wuling Mountainous Region such as Qianjiang district and Shizhu county of Chongqing City, Xianfeng county of Hubei Province, Chenxi county and Tongdao county of Hunan Province and Jiangkou county and Shiqian county of Guizhou Province, 701 valid questionnaires were recycled (see Table 1).The data of the 701 questionnaires are entered into the Cronbach’s of the software SPSS19.0, the test shows that the coefficient is 0.866 (above 0.7), which indicates the questionnaires have higher internal consistency and satisfactory stability, the research result has high credibility.

Table 1
Sample Distribution

	Number	Percentage
The Southeast of Chongqing City	216	30.8
Enshi area of Hubei Province	152	21.7
Huaihua area of Hunan Province	235	33.5
Tongren area of Guizhou Province	98	14.0
Total	701	100.0

During the statistical analysis of the investigation, the research group has also acquired lots of useful information by clarifying the latest achievements on industry poverty alleviation of Wuling Mountainous Region based on the core concept “industry poverty alleviation”, which lays theoretical foundation and empirical support to make

exact judgment for the development situation, problems and reasons in the area.

2. ACHIEVEMENT, PROBLEMS AND REASONS OF INDUSTRY POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN THE WULING MOUNTAINOUS REGION

2.1 The Country Attaching Great Importance to Industry Poverty Alleviation, and Policy of Local Government Being Strengthened

In recent years, with the thorough development of national poverty alleviation work, the poverty alleviation of Wuling Mountainous Region gradually has drawn great attention of national and local governments. In May 2011, the Central Committee and the State Council promulgated “China’s rural poverty alleviation and development program (2011-2020)”, which ascertained the Wuling Mountainous Region as pilot project of the leading regional development and poverty alleviation works, so as to provide demonstration for other contiguous and concentrated destitute areas. In October of the same year, the “planning of regional development and poverty alleviation of Wuling Mountainous Region(2011-2020)” approved by the State Council also made a clear definition for industry poverty alleviation of Wuling Mountainous Region: Implementing the discriminatory industry support policy, the development of tourism, characteristic agriculture, national culture industry and ecological environmental protection industry should be supported and given priority in project approval. In terms of land, credit and tax, policy should be given preferentially; Increasing support force in the construction of production base of featured products and the commerce circulation system; Supporting qualified tourist enterprise to issue corporate bonds, setting up tourism industry investment fund of Wuling Mountainous Region, etc., and it means the poverty alleviation work of Wuling Mountainous Region has risen to the national strategy, which has laid a good foundation for accelerating the pace of industry poverty alleviation of Wuling Mountainous Region.

Under the strong support of the central policy, the governments of Chongqing City, the provinces of Hubei, Hunan and Guizhou have adjusted and increased the support force of industry poverty alleviation based on the regional actual situation. According to the thought of “industry first, the ability above”, the government of Hubei Province has set up specialized area industry development fund with RMB5 billion to support the industry development of poverty stricken areas, the Provincial Poverty Alleviation Office and Provincial Finance Department arranged every key poverty county(city)of 3 million discount loans to industry poverty alleviation every year, which has effectively cracked the bottleneck

problem of fund shortage in the industry development of Wuling Mountainous Region; Hunan Province has put the integration and development of tourism in the important position of Industry poverty alleviation, started the Jishou Aizhai tourism poverty alleviation and development project with a planning total investment of RMB 2 billion, a total of 108 square kilometers' project area, and integrated 18 important scenic spots; Guizhou Province has established development strategy of "one raised with three" (cultural tourism industry drives the agricultural industrialization, new-type industrialization and urban afforestation) in Wuling Mountainous Region, and actively built international famous scenic spots of Fanjing Mountains; Chongqing has carried out the national strategy, increased the force of urban and rural overall development, established the central city status of Qianjiang district in southeast of Chongqing, and speeded up the development of Wuling Mountainous Region of the southeast of Chongqing (The Office of Hubei., 2013).

2.2 Administrative Management Fragmentation, Causing the Independent Industry Layout

As we all know, regional spatial structure is not only an important structure of the regional economic activities, but also the space distribution and space combination form, namely it organizes various elements dispersed in different

geographic space with various economic activities needed. The "administrative economic zone" with China's characteristics determines that the administrative center is the economic center and the large and medium-sized cities are the growth pole of the area, when the city's economic develops to a certain extent, radiation effect will be bigger than the cluster effect, then it will promote the economic development of surrounding areas. Wuling Mountainous Region crosses 71 counties (city, district) of Chongqing City and provinces of Hubei, Hunan and Guizhou, as a result of the administrative area partition, and the counties are bordered on the edge of provinces and cities, lacking of holistic thinking and system design for resources endowment and industry layout among regions, leading to independent industry layout, even exclusive competition, and a lot of repeated investment, redundant construction and repeated industry development, such as those regions all regard hydroelectricity, mineral, building materials and tourism as the pillar industry, and have not formed industries or industry cluster with core market competitiveness, eventually making convergence industry hard to form a big and strong climate in self-counter balance, and more difficult to form a strong industry cluster with radiation force to drive the development of the whole area.

Table 2
Contrast of Industrial Structure and Pillar Industries of Wuling Mountainous Region in 2011

	Contrast of industrial structure	Pillar industries
The Southeast of Chongqing	10.6:55.4:34	Hydroelectricity, cigarette, cement, building materials, tourism
Enshi area of Hubei Province	28.3:31.8:39.9	Hydroelectricity, cigarette, food, building materials, medicine and chemical
Huaihua area of Hunan Province	14.8:44.8:40.4	Electricity, forest farm, medicine, food, tourism
Tongren area of Guizhou Province	28.9:27.9:43.1	metal processing, tobacco, building materials, tourism

Data sources: the statistical yearbook and government website

2.3 The Change of Industrial Structure With Both Sorrow and Hope, Development Level Still Low With Small Volume

After years of support for poverty alleviation, new changes have taken place in the industry of Wuling Mountainous Region and initial results have been achieved. According to the practical investigation and research, from 2001 to 2011, the proportion of three industrial structures of Wuling Mountainous Region has been adjusted from 35:30:35 to 20:38:42, gradually showing a typical "321" industrial structure. And region gradually formed its own pillar industries, such as the pillar industries of Qianjiang district for leisure tourism, green food, biological medicine, etc.; the pillar industries of Enshi area for tobacco and medicine industry, etc.; the pillar industries of Huaihua city for electric power, forestry, medicine, etc.; and Tongren city for metal processing, tobacco and tourism.

Despite the changes of industrial structure, the industry appears more single with a small volume, and sorrow and hope exist. The singleness of industrial structure has directly affected the employment situation and income channels for the poor people. According to the investigation, migrant stayers of Wuling Mountainous Region occupy a large proportion; there are 200,000 migrant workers among the total population of 510,000 in Qianjiang district, Chongqing City. Although migrant workers can help to improve the living level for the poor people in some degree, the occurring rate of poverty still remains high in the region. According to statistics, the per capita GDP was only RMB 11,858 and the per capita income of rural residents was only RMB 4,132 in Wuling Mountainous Region in 2011, which only occupied 33.8% and 59.2% of the national average level. Calculated according to the latest poverty standard of RMB 2,300, on the one hand, the occurring rate of poverty reached

45%, which was far higher than the national average (You, Leng, & Ding, 2013). On the other hand, the income gap between urban and rural areas is big. According to the sample data analysis, the 21.4% of the population whose annual per capita income is RMB5,700 (and the above) is mainly distributed in urban, many rural people are still unable to maintain basic expenses (Figure 1). In

addition, the income gap among areas is also obvious in Wuling Mountainous Region, which is relatively high in the southeast of Chongqing and Huaihua of Human Province and relatively low in Enshi of Hubei Province and Tongten of Guizhou Province, which means the level of poverty has very big difference even in the same area.

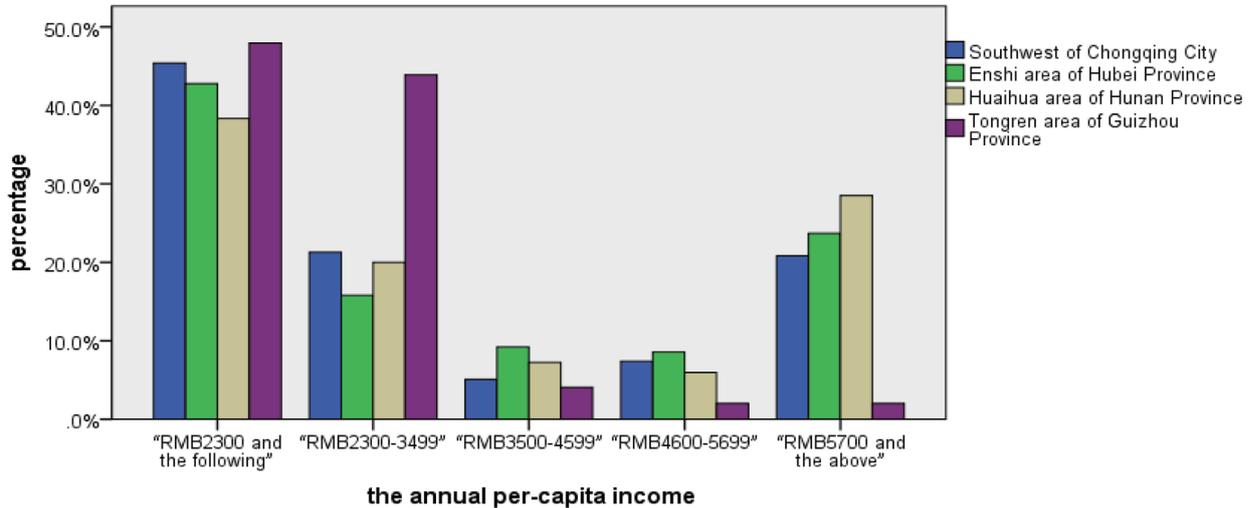


Figure 1
Distribution of Family per Capita Income of Wuling Mountainous Region

From the point of daily expenses, the living level of vast majority of people is very low in the region. According to the results of sample statistical analysis, in Wuling Mountainous Region, the per capita spending under RMB16 accounted for 23.7%, that of between

RMB 16—47 accounted 39.2%, that of between RMB48—64 accounted for 16.4%, that of between RMB64—80 accounted 6.1%, that of above RMB 80 only accounted for 14.6%, showing the trend that the higher of the consumption level, the smaller proportion (Figure 2).

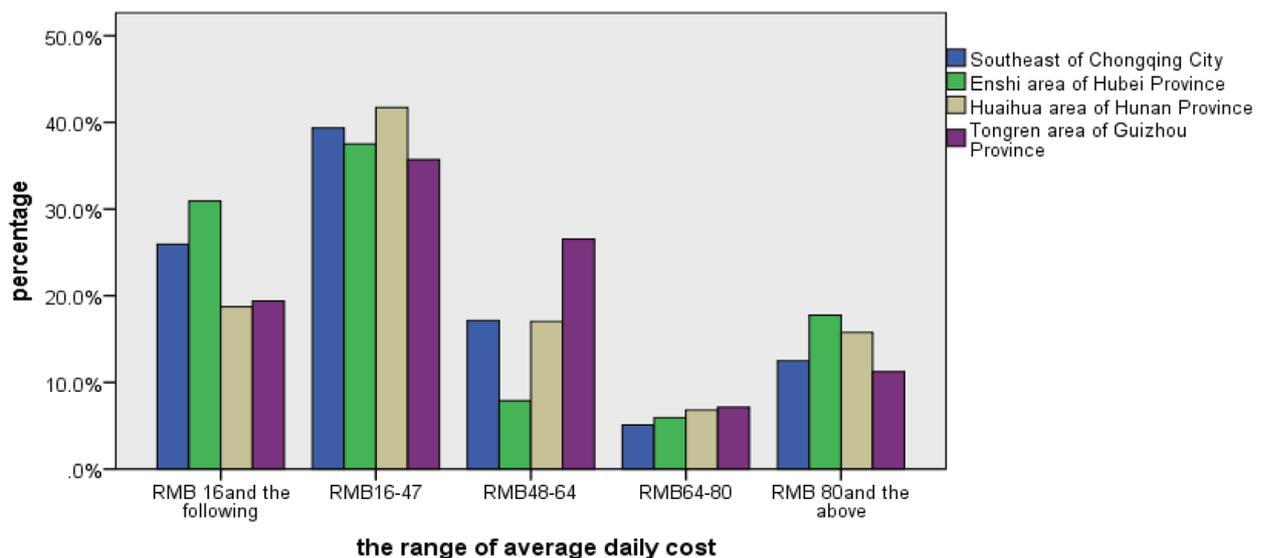


Figure 2
Distribution of Average Daily Cost Range of Residents of Wuling Mountainous Region

2.4 Construction of Infrastructure Lagging Behind and the Conditions of Industrial Development Limited

Infrastructure refers to the material engineering facilities which provide public services for social production and the lives of residents, it is the basic condition for establishment and development of modern agriculture and industry, and it drives “wheel” of industry. The low overall level is the basic characteristics of transportation and telecommunications communication conditions in the Wuling Mountainous Region. According to the field research and statistical analysis, 47 rural towns have no asphalt road, whose total accounts 3.41% of the sum of rural towns, 9,271 administrative village shave no asphalt road, whose total accounts 40.25% of the sum of administrative villages. Transportation is the artery of the market economy operation, but the undeveloped

transportation directly limits the start and span of the economy of Wuling Mountainous Region. In addition, the construction performance of communication facilities is also bad, according to statistics, the telephone penetration rate of Enshi, Huaihua and Tongren area respectively are 71.17 department/one hundred people, 56 department/one hundred people and 42.7 department/one hundred people, it exists very big gap compared with that of nationwide 94.9 department/one hundred people. Currently, there are 7,790 villages have not finished the task of rural electric network reform, which accounts 33.82% of administrative villages. The network platform of each area is still independent with poor unity, interaction and service. The laggard transportation and communication conditions result in the high production cost, transportation cost and transaction cost, which have directly influenced the industry development of the Wuling Mountainous Region.

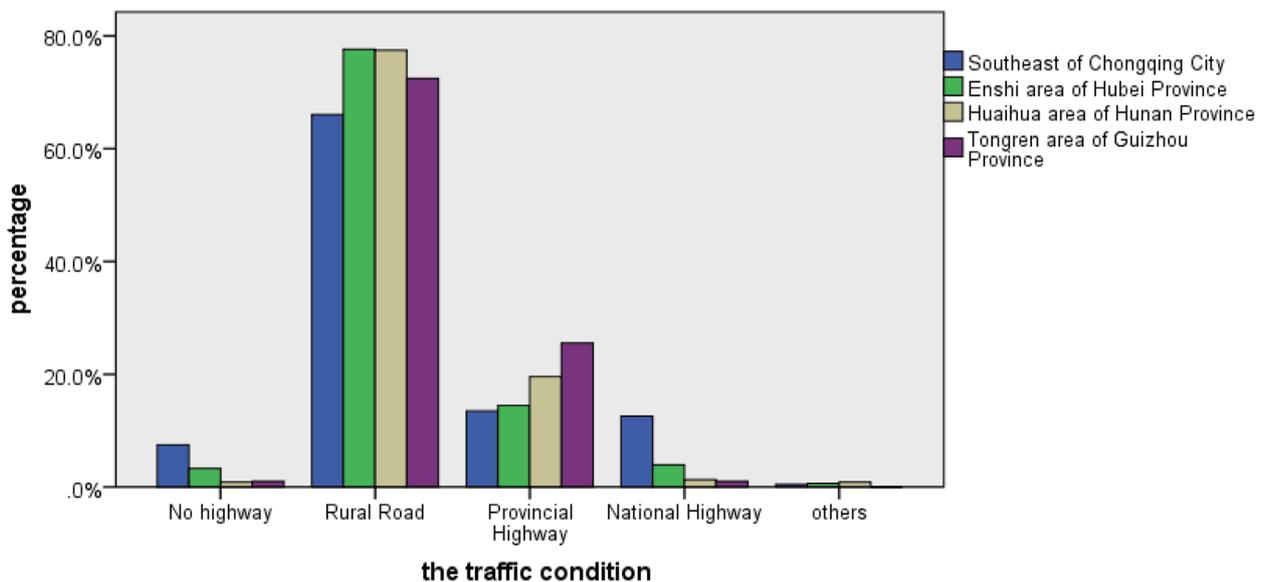


Figure 3 Distribution of Traffic Condition of Wuling Mountainous Region

3. MAIN COUNTERMEASURES FOR INDUSTRY POVERTY ALLEVIATION OF WULING MOUNTAINOUS REGION

Industry poverty alleviation refers to the farmers’ income increasing under the government support by using its own resources advantage to develop special advantage industries and “pollution-free, green, organic” industry, which is an important way of adjusting the economic structure of poor areas, enhancing the “hematopoietic function” of poor areas and increasing the income of the local rural residents. Industry poverty alleviation of Wuling Mountainous Region should develop characteristic industries and distribute industries reasonably based on the government cooperation, finally realizes “scale,

specialization, intensive” production, makes the poor peasant households gradually step on the road of becoming rich, and achieves the great goal of eliminating poverty and striving to prosper.

3.1 Building the Government Collaboration System, Increasing the Policy Support for Industry Poverty Alleviation

Policy support is the effective guarantee for doing well the industry poverty alleviation of Wuling Mountainous Region. Based on the main problems of previous industry poverty alleviation in the Wuling Mountainous Region, the first is to build a government cooperation mechanism with “unified leadership of the central, communication among provinces, joint leadership by cities and counties, inter-coordination among departments”, bringing the industry

development into unified plan, integrating resources, and relying on the existing industry foundation of resources endowment to complete the industry layout and avoid the phenomenon of repetitive construction and investment occurring again. The second is that the four provinces and cities should establish policy coordination mechanism, further perfect the unified preferential policies such as tax reduction or exemption, tax deferral, tax refund for reinvestment and so on, thus creating policy environment for the industry developing rapidly. The third is that relevant provinces and cities should introduce partner assistance policies, encourage more powerful enterprises outside to settle in Wuling Mountainous Region, and provide more opportunities for the poor people. The fourth is to introduce different types of corresponding policies according to the dimension of poverty and industry development situation of each county, using the differentiated policy of “attack the difficulty” and “fill the short board” to promote industry development quality and enhance the driving force.

3.2 Strengthening the Construction of Infrastructure to Improve the Hardware for Industry Development

Industry development of Wuling Mountainous Region is lagged behind, one of the most important reasons is the underdeveloped public transportation system, the traffic is extremely inconvenient in remote region, and there are serious “information poverty”. To improve the hardware for industry development of Wuling Mountainous Region, the first is that the government should increase investment in infrastructure construction, “county territory development fund of Wuling Mountainous Region” is set up to be used to improve the traffic infrastructure and information construction. The second is that it should realize the network for state roads, provincial roads and county roads by strengthening the construction of public transportation, to make the Wuling Mountainous Region become the economic exchange portal between intra-area and surrounding provinces. In addition, the construction of rural roads, farm land water conservancy facilities, urban and rural power grid renovation should be strengthened, completely changing the backward rural production and living conditions. The third is in the aspect of information construction, each department should increase finance investment, accelerate the expansion of power grids, telecommunications broadband network and mobile communication, and expand the coverage of program-controlled telephone and mobile phone network. Moreover, information talents should be cultivated and introduced, shrinking the gap of information technology compared with the economic developed areas, reducing the information poor and laggard in Wuling Mountainous Region.

3.3 Based on Regional Resources Endowment to Make Special Industries Bigger and Stronger

Industry is the core and foundation of local economic development and characteristic is the soul. Developing characteristic industry and strengthening the endogenous power of development in poverty-stricken areas is the core content of poverty alleviation of Wuling Mountainous Region.

First, developing and expanding leisure tourism. The first is to make the overall positioning and launch boutique travel routes in Wuling Mountain ethnic area to realize the integration of tourism. Relying on natural resources, the boutique travel routes in Wuling Mountain ethnic area can be composed of the natural human landscape tour, represented by the Wujiang river gallery, the mountain landscape tour represented by Zhangjiajie and so on, the lake water landscape tour represented by the Tuojiang river, the historic towns tour represented by the ancient city of Phoenix, the karst cave tour represented by Qiliang hole of Hunan Province, the red tourism represented by Mao Zedong’s former residence, the ethnic village cultural experience tour represented by Dehang folk village of Xiangxi and Fanjing Mountain tourism festival of Tongren. The second is to increase infrastructure construction such as railway and highway in the scenic area, to make it more humanized and more convenient for tourists. The third is to enhance external propaganda by the television, newspaper, internet and other media, or carry out relevant culture and art festival, take scenery film of tourism, tourist brochures and so on.

Second, optimizing the structure of agriculture industry and developing characteristic and efficient agriculture. Each region should be based on local resources endowment to develop industries with comparative advantage. Such as striving to develop selenium-rich tea processing of Enshi region, the kiwi fruit series products of Xiangxi region, bull deep processing of Qianjiang district and Osmond pretreating of Hefeng region; expanding high quality animal husbandry, authentic medicinal materials and special vegetable foundation, improving the additional value and commodity rate of agricultural special products. By developing characteristic agriculture and optimizing the structure of agricultural industry, realize the organic combination of survival supportability, ecological protection and competition characteristic of the agriculture in Wuling Mountainous Region. Meanwhile, based on the development of characteristic agriculture, expanding the financing channels, multi-level attracting domestic and overseas investors, foreign capital and urban industrial and commercial capital to exploit the local advantage resources, encouraging individuals to carve out, developing rich industry, thus injecting new vitality for poverty alleviation.

Third, developing ethnic handicrafts in Wuling Mountainous Region, and encouraging social forces to participate in poverty alleviation and development. By encouraging NGO, social enterprises and other social organizations and social capital to participate in the ethnic handicrafts development of Wuling Mountainous Region, which can not only realize the purpose of the ethnic minority people getting rid of poverty, but also can improve the whole opening degree of the Wuling Mountainous Region by making full use of social capital.

Fourth, strongly support biological medicine industry development. By using modern biological extraction technology, building Chinese medicine slices and pharmaceutical intermediates extraction production line, promoting the new drug research and development. Developing medicine and chemical industry based on the regional advantage medicinal material resources such as Lichuan coptis, Longhui honeysuckle, Longshan lily, Zhangjiajie gallnut, Youyang Artemisia annu and so on, supporting national characteristics drug production.

3.4 Relying on the Advantages in the Surrounding Area, Building Industrial Demonstration Zone for Poverty Alleviation

The Wuling Mountainous Region crosses three provinces and one municipality, it is the important node between the north and the south area, undertaking the radiation and docking function of economic circle of Changsha, Zhuzhou and Xiangtan, the economic circle of Chengdu-Chongqing and the economic circle of Yunnan-Guizhou, possessing the obvious location advantage and comparative advantage. The four provinces and cities should do well in top-level design and total planning, building industry park of poverty alleviation as the carrier, focusing on the development of pillar industries such as green food, tourism, medicine and tobacco, enhancing industry radiation function of poverty alleviation by doing strong industry park.

On the specific operation, the first is that Qianjiang district of Chongqing City should focus on developing green food, building materials, chemical, pharmaceutical, public services and so on, speed up the construction of ecological cultural tourism, ecological agriculture, ecological planting and breeding, speed up the formation of transportation hub and public service center of the southeast of Chongqing. The second is that Enshi region of Hubei Province should consolidate and advance the position of tobacco pillar industry, develop these lenium-rich food industry with wild specialties as the principal, forest and fruit industry with high production, and medicine industry with traditional Chinese medicinal materials production and process and amino acid series products development as the principal on a large scale, to build up Enshi to be a garden city and excellent tourist city. The third is that Huaihua region of Hunan Province should increase the construction of market carrier, build

the professional market such as forest product market, Chinese herbal medicine market, building materials market, means of production market, used car trading market and piece market and so on; bear the radiation and docking function of Pearl River Delta Economic Circle and Beibu Gulf Economic Circle, to build up Huaihua to be an important integrated transport hub and modern logistics center. The fourth is that Tongren region of Guizhou Province should start from the viewpoint of the integrity of Wuling Mountains tourism, focus on tourism led by the Fanjing Mountains; Strive to develop raw materials processing industry, specialty foods processing industry, tourism services and other related industries, to build up Tongren to be a core city of business and tourism city and landscape garden city.

3.5 Vigorously Supporting Leading Enterprises, Strengthening the Leading Role of Industry Poverty Alleviation

“Poverty alleviation leading enterprises”, mainly refers to the enterprises that regard agricultural products processing and circulation as the major works, or labor force in poor regions as the main body, by a variety of benefit coupling mechanism driving the poor peasant households to enter the market, promoting the industry structure and employment structure adjustment, and have reached the standard in the scale and operation indicator and achieved affirmation by the Poverty Alleviation Office (Sun & Liu, 2012). At present, the Wuling Mountainous Region local governments should select a batch of leading enterprises and increase support force, and make them bigger and stronger as soon as possible, thus giving full play to the leading role in the poverty alleviation. The first is to strive for more national poverty alleviation leading enterprises. There are 25 poverty alleviation leading enterprises, and 53 counties (city, area) have no poverty alleviation leading enterprises in Wuling Mountainous Region. The second is to increase the fund for poverty alleviation leading enterprises. Financial institutions should give credit support targeted to agricultural industrialization leading enterprise in Wuling Mountainous Region, and make a difference with general industrial and commercial enterprises, reasonably determine the loan amount and loan term, ease lending conditions, and reduce the loan threshold. The third is to build a agriculture industry chain of “leading enterprises + professional organization for economic cooperation + base + farmers”, increase competitive ability and driving ability of leading enterprises, boost agriculture industrialized, large-scaled and modernized developing. The fourth is to pay the role of radiating and driving of technological innovation of the leading enterprise, the enterprise should use technology to guide industry, promote the development of the industry, and strengthen the technology content of cooperation, to ensure the sustainable development of industry.

CONCLUSION

There are unique geographical advantage, resource and environment advantage in Wuling Mountainous Region, but its economic development lags behind, the living standard of people is low, industry structure is unreasonable, competitive advantage is not prominent. The root cause due to the Wuling Mountains Region is located in the confluence of the three provinces and one city, there is no unified administrative leadership organization and the urban space is loose. Industry poverty alleviation as the most direct and effective way for poverty alleviation and development, under the support of governments at all levels, by vigorously developing characteristic industries, reasonably distributing the industry, building demonstration zone for poverty alleviation, and supporting the leading enterprises such a series of measures of promoting industry development, the Wuling Mountains Region will be able to become a rising star with people's happy life , more beautiful landscape, more convenient commuting and more strong overall strength, and become the demonstration zone for continuous destitute areas in poverty alleviation, moreover, it will accelerate to build a well-off society in an all-round way and implement the Chinese dream of the people in the Wuling Mountainous Region.

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