



Pathways and Local Experiences in Comprehensive Rural Revitalisation — The Case of Gangcha County

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Abstract: This report examines Gangcha County in Haibei Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province, delving into its implementation pathways and local experiences within the comprehensive rural revitalisation process. Through analysis of interview data collected from Gangcha County's Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, and Water Resources Technology Bureau, the Tibetan Gongma Village in Guoluo, and Jinshan Pasture, the study explores multiple dimensions including industrial development, talent cultivation, cultural heritage preservation, and ecological conservation. Through developing distinctive agricultural and pastoral industries, promoting agritourism integration, strengthening talent cultivation and recruitment, and prioritising cultural preservation and ecological conservation, Gangcha County has achieved notable successes in rural revitalisation while encountering certain challenges. This report aims to summarise its successful practices, offering reference and insights for other regions advancing their rural revitalisation strategies.

Keywords: Gangcha County; rural revitalisation; industrial development

1. Introduction

The Rural Revitalisation Strategy serves as the overarching approach to addressing the "agriculture, rural areas and farmers" issues in the new era, holding significant importance for achieving agricultural and rural modernisation and promoting integrated urban-rural development. In advancing rural revitalisation, various regions have actively explored locally appropriate development pathways, accumulating rich practical experience. As a key county in Qinghai Province, Gangcha County has achieved remarkable accomplishments in rural revitalisation, with its development model and experiences warranting in-depth study and summarisation. This report analyses interview materials from relevant institutions and villages in Gangcha County to explore its pathways and local experiences in comprehensive rural revitalisation, aiming to provide valuable reference for other regions.

2. Overview of Gangcha County

Gangcha County, under the jurisdiction of Haibei Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai Province, is situated in the northeast of Qinghai and the southwest of Haibei Prefecture. It exhibits a typical plateau continental climate characterised by long sunshine hours and significant diurnal temperature variations, covering a total area of 8,138.07 square kilometres. By the end of 2024, Gangcha County had a total population of 46,000, with the Tibetan ethnic group constituting 75% of the total population. As of March 2025, the county administered two towns and three townships.

3. Implementation Pathways for Rural Revitalisation in Gangcha County

3.1 Full-chain Upgrading of Distinctive Agriculture and Animal Husbandry

Gangcha County has innovatively established a full industrial chain model, forming a "government + enterprise/cooperative + farmer" interest linkage framework to build a complete industrial chain from breeding to processing and sales. Enterprises engage in both bulk sales of live cattle and sheep and deep processing, while also developing diversified products such as yak jerky, yak meat paste, and canned yellow mushrooms. They have further collaborated with Shandong Dong'e Jiao to develop distinctive categories like wood glue.

3.2 Exploring Innovative Business Models in Agritourism Integration

Gangcha County has prioritised "pastoralism + tourism" as its core strategy to drive the diversification of rural industries. On one hand, it established a Tourism Investment and Development Company, forming a strategic partnership with Qinghu Agriculture and Animal Husbandry Investment and Development Company to coordinate agritourism integration projects. This initiative clearly positions the development of cultural tourism formats, such as camping, highlighting grassland scenery and pastoral folk customs. On the other hand, leveraging distinctive resources like yellowfish migration and popular

social media landmarks, the county has intensified tourism promotion. By showcasing unique highland natural and cultural landscapes, it attracts visitors from within and beyond the province, significantly enhancing the county's tourism profile and influence.

3.3 Attracting, Cultivating and Empowering Rural Talent

Gangcha County actively cultivates local talent by organising entrepreneurship forums, providing specialised training, and offering policy support to encourage returning university graduates to engage in rural industrial development. A cohort of these returnees have emerged as village-level industrial leaders, with some assuming key roles such as cooperative chairpersons, effectively driving income growth for surrounding villagers.

Gangcha County has strengthened industry-academia-research collaborations with universities and research institutes, injecting professional technical momentum into industrial development. For instance, Qinghu Agriculture and Animal Husbandry Investment and Development Co., Ltd. has partnered with Qinghai University and the Provincial Academy of Animal Science to conduct research on yak and Tibetan sheep breed improvement and optimisation of breeding techniques. Concurrently, industry experts are invited to provide skills training for local farmers and herders, comprehensively enhancing their practical production and management capabilities.

3.4 Sustainable Development Practices Prioritising Ecology

Gangcha County has comprehensively implemented ecological farming practices in its agricultural and pastoral production, with Jinshan Pasture serving as a prime example. By adopting an early lambing model, the county reduces grazing pressure on pastures, shortens the breeding cycle, and achieves earlier returns. Simultaneously, livestock manure and waste are returned to fields and grasslands, converting into natural organic fertilisers. This approach achieves a dual equilibrium: restoring pasture ecosystems while enhancing livestock farming profitability.

4. Local Experiences in Rural Revitalisation in Gangcha County

4.1 Combining Government Leadership with Multi-Stakeholder Participation

Government-guided ecological prosperity for the people stems from top-down administrative logic and bottom-up rural development needs[1]. The Gangcha County Party Committee and County Government have played a leading role in rural revitalisation, formulating a series of policies and plans to coordinate the advancement of agricultural and pastoral development, industrial integration, and talent cultivation. Concurrently, they actively guide enterprises, cooperatives, and farmers to participate, establishing a development model of government + enterprise/cooperative + farmer that fully mobilises the initiative and enthusiasm of all parties.

4.2 Developing Distinctive Industries Tailored to Local Conditions

By developing distinctive planting, distinctive breeding, and distinctive cultural tourism industries, scale and branding have been achieved, thereby promoting diversified and specialised industrial development and boosting farmers' incomes[2]. Gangcha County leverages local resource advantages to develop distinctive agriculture, animal husbandry, and tourism tailored to its environment. Based on local climate, geography, and resource endowments, it prioritises specialised industries such as yak and Tibetan sheep breeding while establishing corresponding regional brands. For tourism development, it integrates grassland and pastoralist characteristics to plan projects like camping, highlighting local distinctiveness. This locally adapted strategy enhances industrial competitiveness and sustainable development capacity.

4.3 Emphasis on Integrated Industrial Development

Gangcha County actively promotes the integration of agriculture and tourism, as well as the convergence of primary, secondary, and tertiary industries, thereby expanding the development space for rural industries. By developing integrated agriculture-tourism industries, it organically combines agriculture and animal husbandry with tourism, not only facilitating the transformation and upgrading of agricultural and pastoral sectors but also driving tourism development. Simultaneously, within the agricultural and pastoral industry chain, it strengthens the integration of production, processing, and sales segments, thereby increasing industrial value-added.

4.4 Upholding the principle of ecological priority

County governments should adopt the "Two Mountains" theory as the guiding principle for ecological revitalisation, fully unlocking the multifaceted value of ecosystems to convert ecological resources into tangible benefits and advance ecologically habitable rural development[3]. Throughout its rural revitalisation process, Gangcha County has consistently upheld the principle of prioritising ecology, embedding ecological conservation throughout industrial development and rural

construction. Through measures such as promoting ecological farming models and strengthening environmental governance, it has achieved a virtuous cycle between economic growth and ecological protection. This development philosophy centred on ecological priorities has laid a solid foundation for the sustainable development of rural areas.

5. Practical Challenges Facing Rural Revitalisation in Gangcha County

5.1 Bottlenecks in Industrial Development

Firstly, insufficient resilience to market risks leaves core products like beef and mutton vulnerable to price fluctuations and market pressure from imported meat products. Some entities, such as Jinshan Pasture, face challenges including difficulty in brand expansion, limited sales channels, and narrow profit margins. Secondly, industrial value-added remains low, with agricultural and livestock product processing still dominated by primary categories. There is an insufficient supply of high-end and specialised products, and the overall R&D and innovation capabilities of enterprises require enhancement.

5.2 Shortcomings in Talent Supply

On one hand, there exists a structural shortage of talent, with severe outflow of local young and middle-aged labour. Constraints such as geographical location and economic conditions also hinder the recruitment of scarce professionals in sales and internet operations. On the other hand, talent cultivation mechanisms are inadequate, with existing training programmes failing to align with industry needs. Furthermore, the incentive and security systems for talent are incomplete, failing to fully motivate individuals to engage in entrepreneurial endeavours.

5.3 Funding Constraints

Firstly, there is a substantial overall funding shortfall, with insufficient investment in industrial upgrading, infrastructure development, and ecological conservation. For instance, the Gaoluozangongma Village Cooperative faces funding challenges for infrastructure construction, while agricultural and pastoral enterprises struggle with operational financing. Secondly, capital utilisation efficiency remains low, characterised by fragmented funding allocation and redundant project development. Some funds lack scientific planning and comprehensive oversight, resulting in underutilised returns.

5.4 Constraints in Other Dimensions

Firstly, policy implementation suffers from poor coordination and inadequate interdepartmental mechanisms. Enterprises like Jinshan Pasture encounter cumbersome procedures and inefficient departmental liaison during approvals, hindering project progress. Secondly, disaster response remains weak. Frequent hazards such as spring frost damage and summer/autumn hailstorms and droughts are exacerbated by existing agricultural insurance schemes offering low coverage limits and limited scope, failing to adequately compensate farmers and herders for losses.

6. Recommendations and Conclusions

6.1 Recommendations

6.1.1 Promoting Industrial Upgrading and Market Expansion

Increase investment in agricultural and pastoral R&D, enhancing production quality and efficiency through technological means, digital tools, and innovation[4]. Support enterprises in developing high-end, customised agricultural and livestock products to elevate industrial value-added. Strengthen market research and channel development, deepen cooperation with e-commerce platforms to expand online sales channels, while reinforcing regional brand operations to enhance product market resilience and core competitiveness. Cultural empowerment has become a crucial strategic pathway for driving comprehensive rural revitalisation and modernisation[5].

6.1.2 Refining Talent Attraction, Cultivation and Incentive Systems

Rural talent revitalisation constitutes a strategic imperative for village development, with digital technology serving as the strategic enabler for this endeavour[6]. Optimise training curricula to align with industrial demands, implementing bespoke, hands-on skills programmes; formulate more attractive recruitment policies offering specialised housing and remuneration packages for critical talent; establish robust incentive mechanisms to stimulate innovation through equity dividends and honours.

6.1.3 Expanding Funding Channels and Enhancing Utilisation Efficiency

Actively secure specialised support funds from higher authorities and guide social capital towards rural revitalisation projects. Consolidate dispersed funds for concentrated investment in key industries and critical sectors. Establish a comprehensive fund oversight system, strengthen project audits and performance evaluations to ensure precise allocation

and efficient utilisation of resources.

6.1.4 Refine Policy Implementation and Interdepartmental Coordination Mechanisms

Strengthen policy publicity and interpretation to ensure grassroots entities accurately grasp policy benefits; establish cross-departmental coordination mechanisms to streamline approval processes and reduce processing times; improve the policy implementation supervision and assessment system to guarantee the effective delivery of all measures.

6.2 Conclusion

Throughout its comprehensive rural revitalisation process, Gangcha County has actively explored locally appropriate development pathways, achieving notable results. Through measures including developing distinctive agriculture and animal husbandry, advancing agritourism integration, strengthening talent cultivation and recruitment, and prioritising cultural heritage preservation and ecological conservation, the county has enhanced agricultural efficiency, increased farmers' incomes, and fostered rural prosperity.

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