

Vocational Education in China

I. History

Modern vocational education in China can be traced back to 1860s. It is believed that the Fujian Shipment School, which was built in 1867 in Mawei, Fujian Province, is the first ever vocational school in China. In late Qing Dynasty, vocational schools were the places where practical skills and occidental technologies were taught. The Renyin Schooling System published in 1902 established a system for industry training (vocational education). In 1917, the Zhonghua Vocation Education Society was founded, which was the first vocational education organization jointly run by the education sector and industries. However, in old China, the vocational education developed very slowly due to poor economy and underdeveloped industry and agriculture. In 1949, there were only 1,174 secondary vocational schools (including 610 secondary teacher schools) in China with 231,500 students enrolled (including 151.7 thousands secondary teacher school students).

After the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, the vocational education developed quickly. By 1965, there were 1,265 secondary specialized schools with an enrollment of 547,400 students. 281 artisan schools with 101,000 students enrolled, 61,626 vocational secondary schools (most were at junior secondary level) with an enrollment of 4,433,400 (including 3,658,400 at junior secondary level). There are several driving forces behind the vocational education boost. Firstly, China then was in urgent need for competent technicians to develop the economy extensively. Secondly, China's old vocational education sectors were integrated. Thirdly, China learned experience from the former Soviet Union. The Culture Revolution broke out later on left negative impact on China's vocational education and brought it to a halt.

China launched the reform and opening-up policies in 1978 and entered a new historical era. Vocational education therefore has been injected with tremendous vitality. According to Deng Xiaoping's instructions, the State Council approved the Report on the Structural Reform of the Secondary Education in 1980, which marks the start of the rectification in secondary education structure across the country with its priority put on making great effort to develop vocational and technical education, so as to adapt the high school education systems to the needs of socialist modernization. In 1985, the central government publicized the Decisions on the Reform of the Education System and declared explicitly that China will adjust its secondary education structure and make great efforts to develop vocational and technical education. It also stated that a multi-layer framework from junior secondary level to tertiary level, which is of rational structure and industry participation, and allows vocational and technical education to articulate with regular

This article first appeared in the publication Vocational Education in China issued by the Ministry of Education of the Peoples Republic of China dated April, 2006. Permission has been granted by the Embassy of the PRC to reprint this article here.

education shall be established gradually. The objective is to train hundreds of millions of experience and skillful workers, farmers and businessmen with considerable knowledge. In 1991, the State Council issued the Decisions on Making Great Efforts to Develop the Vocational and Technical Education, urging the local governments at all levels to pay close attention to the strategic status and role of vocational and technical education, and to make great efforts to develop vocational education. In 1996, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress promulgated the Law of Vocational Education of the People's Republic of China and regulated the status and role of vocational education in China's social and economic development and in the national education system. The law also regulated the vocational education system, the accountabilities, and the management system, thus establishing the legal status of vocational education. The government substituted "vocational and technical education" for "vocational education" in this law. In 1999, the Central Committee of the China's Communist Party and the State Council published the Decisions Concerning Carrying Out in-depth Education Reform and Promoting Quality-oriented Education, declaring that China will strengthen high school education, including regular education and vocational education, and vocational education at tertiary level.

Entering the 21st century, China's vocational education achieves another new upsurge. At the 16th CPC Party Congress in 2002, the government initiated to cultivate hundreds of millions of high-quality laborers, tens of millions of specialized personnel and a great number of top-notch innovative talents. A sound modern national educational system, scientific, technological and cultural innovation systems as well as nationwide fitness and medical and health systems will take shape. People will have access to good education. Senior secondary education will be basically universalized and illiteracy will be eliminated. A learning society for all with life-long learning will emerge to boost human being's all-round development. In order to promote the vocational education to serve the building of well-off society, the State Council held the National Vocational Education Conference in 2002 and issued the Decisions Concerning Promoting Vocational Education Reform and Development. According to the conference and the Decisions, vocational education constitutes an important component of China's education system and foundation of China's national economy and social development. To implement the strategy of "rejuvenating China through science and education development", to promote the sustainable development of economy and society, and to improve employment and reemployment, we must put great emphasis on accelerating the reform and development of vocational education. In the beginning of 2004, the State Council approved the 2003-2007 National Education Rejuvenation Action Plan, which proposed the Vocational Education and Training Innovation Project. In 2004, the Ministry of Education and the related departments of the State Council held the National Vocational Education Conference once again and formulated the Several Opinions Concerning Further Improving Vocational Education. In the document, the government further specified the policies and measurements for China's vocational education reform and development for the current state and in the years to come.

With the unremitting efforts for a long time, China's vocational education is constantly growing through various reform actions. A modern vocational education system with Chinese characteristics has taken shape basically. It can meet the need for qualified and competent laborers in China's economic system transition and economic and social development.

II. System and Structure

The Law of Vocational Education in the People's Republic of China specifies that China's vocational education is an important reposition channel for students after they finished their junior secondary school study. It aims at establishing a cohesive vocational education system that values both vocational school education and vocational training programs, and encourages the articulation across different education sectors.

According to the Law, China's vocational school education falls into three categories, i.e. junior secondary, senior secondary, and tertiary level, which are conducted by vocational schools at the three levels respectively. The vocational training programs include pre-job training, training programs for military men who leave the army, apprenticeship training, on-job training, reposition training, and other, which are conducted by vocational training institutes or vocational schools respectively.

Vocational education at junior secondary level is part of China's nine-year compulsory education system. Vocational schools at junior secondary level deliver the programs. Primary school graduates or equivalent are recruited to study for 3 to 4 years on both general subjects and technical skills. Currently, most of the schools of this kind are located in underdeveloped rural and remote mountainous areas. With the development of China's economy and society, this kind of schools is getting extinct gradually. Vocational education at junior secondary level will be transformed to basic or rudimental vocational training.

Vocational education at junior secondary level is carried out during the high school state. It also includes some post-secondary training programs. It aims at cultivating hundreds of millions of skillful people and high-quality laborers after nine-year compulsory education. It is the core part of China's vocational education system. Junior secondary school graduates or equivalents are recruited at schools at senior secondary level to receive training of 3 years. The courses include both general courses for high school students and the vocational technical courses and skill training designed for the needs of workplaces.

At present, there are 4 kinds of vocational schools at senior secondary level in China:

1. Secondary Specialized Schools, which mainly recruits junior secondary school graduates. The study time varies from 3 to 4 years. The traditional goals are to cultivate medium-level technicians, administrative staff and primary schools teachers. Since the adoption of reform and opening up policy, particularly in recent years, this kind of schools came up with training programs for all kinds of skillful laborers.

2. Artisan Schools, which mainly recruits junior secondary school graduates. The length of schooling is three years. The training targets are junior and secondary artisans.

3. Vocational High Schools, which evolved on the basis of secondary education structure reform. Most of the schools rebuilt upon general middle schools. They recruit mainly junior secondary school graduates. The length of schooling is varies from 2 to 4 years, mostly 3 years. It cultivates similar personnel as the secondary specialized schools and artisan schools. Most of the graduates will become operators in workplaces.

4. Adult Secondary Specialized Schools, which developed quickly after the reform and opening up. It is established originally to train adults or full-time workers with equivalent literacy of junior secondary school students to medium-level technicians. As the situation is changed, the schools mainly recruit junior secondary school graduates. The length of schooling varied from 2 to 3 years.

In the 21st century, the cultivation goals for and schooling forms of the traditional four kinds of vocational schools at secondary level converged gradually. China has decided to adjust and reform the vocational education systems and integrate the resources for breakthrough. There will be only secondary vocational schools or vocational technical schools.

Vocational education at tertiary level (vocational colleges) is established to meet the increasing needs of local economic and social development after China's reform and opening up. It aims at cultivating tens of millions of high-tech personnel after high school education. The present vocational colleges are derived from the higher specialized schools, the vocational universities, adult colleges and universities, and some high-quality secondary vocational schools. Vocational colleges mainly recruit the regular high school and secondary vocational school graduates to study for 2 to 3 years. They pay special attention to cultivating practice-oriented, craft-oriented, and skill-oriented personnel.

The vocational training programs aim at improving technical and vocational skills for the sake of employment, keeping up with the technological progress, transferring military service to civilian work, or hobbies. Compared to school education, the training programs mainly focus on one subject of flexible approaches and duration. At present, China's major training institutes are adult technical training schools (including worker technical training schools and farmer technical training schools addressing different trainees), vocational schools of all kinds and of levels, and employment training centers. They provide certificate training programs, apprenticeship training programs, employment (including first-time employment and reemployment) training programs, on-job training programs, training programs for migrant workers from rural areas to urban areas, and practical skills training farmers, etc.

III. Achievements

Chinese government attaches great importance to vocational education. Thanks to the hard work of vocational education workers. China's vocational education has scored tremendous achievements through reform and development. Valuable experience has been created and accumulated in this regard.

1. A vocational education system with Chinese characteristics has taken shape initially. The system covers vocational education at junior, secondary and tertiary level, and is linked to general education and adult education. Degree education and vocational training are equally emphasized in this system.

2. Vocational training and education of all kinds and all levels grow quickly with its scale expanding gradually. In 2004, according to statistics, there are 697 junior vocational schools in China with 164,200 students recruited and 525,100 enrolled in total, 14,500 secondary vocational

schools with 5,481,400 recruited and 13,678,900 enrolled students. At the same time, secondary vocational schools have trained more than 7.8 millions person-times for the public. There are 1,047 vocational education institutions at tertiary level, including specialized schools at tertiary level, with 2.37 millions recruited students and nearly 5.9565 millions enrolled. Schools and training institutions of all levels and types have provided more than 69.57 millions person-times training at secondary level.

3. China's vocational education has trained a large number of practice-oriented human resources and high-quality workers in the forefront of production and service for China's social and economic development. It is estimated that China's vocational schools of all levels and types have trained over 50 million graduates since the reform and opening up policy was adopted over 20 years ago. The quality of workers in China has been tremendously improved. It benefits China's economic development, industrial structure adjustment and social stability as well. In the meantime, hundreds of millions of urban and rural workers have received vocational education and training. The vocational education has made great contributions to China's fast development of economy and society.

4. Significant progress has been made in the vocational education system reform. A system with governments as the main sponsors and non-governmental sectors as the supplementary sponsors has taken shape initially. A managerial system with overall planning by the local governments and combination of different sectors has been established. A recruitment system and graduates employment system, which can basically meet the requirements of socialist market economy system, is set up.

China's vocational education managerial system is a system that is characterized by the leadership of the State Council, administration of governments at different levels, i.e. central government takes the responsibility of macro-control, while local governments are the major players, and the participation of all the walks of life. In terms of the school running system, Chinese government plays a leading role, while industry are invited to give a full play, and other sectors are encouraged to take part in. In a word, a diversified vocational education system has been established in China, in which educational departments in the governments play a dominant role, other departments, industrial enterprises, civil society, and individual citizens work as a joint effort for China's vocational education development.

5. A vocational education interdepartmental joint meeting system has been established. In 2004, with the approval of the State Council, the Ministry of Education, the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Personnel, the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development jointly set up the system. Over 10 provinces in China follow the same pattern of the Central Government and established the provincial-level vocational education interdepartmental joint meeting system. The system brings forth new ideas to China's vocational education development and intensifies the leadership and overall planning of the governments, promotes the communication and coordination of relevant governments in vocational education. It is of great significance for China's vocational education reform and development.

6. Teaching reform of vocational education is deepened. Guided by the principles of service-oriented and employment-driven, A number of experiments in teaching have taken place, including radical innovation in cultivation modes, integration of learning and practice, collaboration between schools and industry, tailored training, module courses, flexible timetable, trial in credit system, emphasis on ethics and career consultation, etc. All of these measures have remarkably boosted vocational education development in China.

Being a developing country of huge population, under-developed economy and considerable regional disparity between urban and rural areas, China drew the following lessons in the process of vocational education development always taking into consideration China's context and reality, giving priority to vocational education, consistently raising the awareness of the significance of vocational education by the public, particularly governments at all levels; letting governments play a major role in running vocational education, while mobilizing industries, enterprises, and nongovernmental organizations to actively take part in, so as to create a momentum of running vocational education by the whole society; adhering to the principle of serving China's economic and social development, for industry restructure, for agriculture, rural areas and farmers, for employment and reemployment, for a coordinative development of vocational education, economy, and society; in light of service-oriented and employment-driven, further reforming the vocational education system and pedagogy, putting forward quality education, improving education quality and outcomes; adhering to the policy of opening to the outside world, learning successful experience from other countries; adopting rule of law and improving vocational education legislation. China will follow the above principles to further develop the vocational education.

IV. Challenges

Chinese government puts forward the objective that by the middle of this century China will have built a well-off society in an all-round way. To this end, a new avenue to industrialization shall be taken to speed up urbanization. At the same time, employment and reemployment shall be increased, and educational, scientific, and cultural undertakings shall be enhanced. Further efforts shall be taken to develop vocational education and quicken the pace of human resource development so as to translate the heavy burden of population in China into the advantage of human capital. This no doubt creates new opportunities to develop vocational education. However, it shall be born in mind that China's vocational education is confronting many challenges as well as the new strategic opportunities:

1. With the reform of Chinese economic and social systems, especially the establishment and improvement of socialist market economy, and the accelerating of the modernization pace, original school-running systems, managerial systems, operation mechanisms, and relevant policies shall be innovated.

2. The awareness of the importance of vocational education development shall be raised. The efforts shall be further intensified to tackle the issue of disparity between secondary vocational education and general high school education.

3. China's labor market is a buyers' one in general. Meanwhile, with speeding up of urbanization, a great deal of rural labor flows into the urban areas and non-agricultural industries. Consequently, China has been dealing with employment difficulties, which poses challenges to the quality and development of vocational education.

4. Due to limited input, China's vocational education is constrained from rapid progress. In recent years, Chinese government has considerably increased its input in vocational education. However, given the large scale of China's vocational education, only a small volume of input goes to individual vocational school and student. The increase is fairly limited. Some vocational schools cannot improve their school-running conditions, education scale, and teaching quality due to limited funding.

5. China is a country of vast territory and regional disparity in economic development. Vocational education is also hampered by it. Vocational education in economically developed regions and less developed regions is unbalanced. In rural and western regions, vocational education schools develop slowly and lag behind the schools in urban and eastern regions. School facilities are relatively poor.

V. Main Schemes of Reform and Develop

The main schemes of reform and develop Chinese vocational education are to uphold Deng Xiaoping Theory and Three Represents Thoughts as our guide, to have the scientific view of development in command, to make great efforts to develop vocational education, to organize and implement the "Vocational Education and Training Innovation Project" proposed in the 2003-2007 Action Plan of Education Rejuvenation, to promote further development of vocational education in the new era, to train more skill-oriented people, to provide more practical skills training for rural migrant labors, and to meet the new demand of the establishment of a well-off society in an all-round way.

1. Guided by the scientific view of development, greater efforts shall be made to promote the rapid development of vocational education.

Chinese government will promote a coordinative development of vocational education, economic development, labor force and employment, and human resource development, in light of the scientific view of development, maintain a sustained, rapid, and sound development of vocational education in new era, build a scientific and reasonable vocational education structure, train all kinds of skill-oriented personnel and labors for economic and social development, and develop diversified and qualified vocational education to meet people's needs.

2. The principle of service-oriented and employment-driven principle shall be followed, to strengthen the role of vocational education is playing in China's economic and social development.

Authority shall be further dissolved to vocational education schools and colleges, so as to encourage them to be more market-driven and more involvement of other resources. Disciplines and training programs shall be set up to address market demands and reality. In line with the

employment-driven principle, the school-running model and personnel training model shall be further reformed, a flexible training system and credit system shall be established, to promote the combination of practice and learning in vocational schools and colleges, encourage the cooperation between vocational schools and enterprises, and tailored training. In the mean time, education in professional ethics and entrepreneurship as well as career consultant shall be strengthened.

3. We shall train more skill-oriented talents to retain human resources for new type industrialization.

Now that China has taken a new avenue to industrialization, there is an urgent need for more skillful people. We shall conscientiously organize and implement the Training Plan of Badly-needed Skill-oriented Talents of Manufacturing industries and Modern Service industry in Vocational Schools and Colleges. According to the plan, we will have trained 1 million graduates of relevant disciplines, and 3 million person-times of short-term skills training by 2007. The vocational schools and colleges and enterprises should play an active role in training the skill-oriented talents. Schools should cooperate with enterprises in building demonstrative talent training bases, implement tailored training, adopt integrated training approaches of vocational school education, on-the-job training, apprenticeship, and individual professional improvement to promote the formation of the echelon of junior, secondary, and senior skill-oriented talents and the overall development of it.

4. We shall make great efforts to develop the vocational education in rural areas.

We shall implement the 2003-2010 National Training Plan for Farmer Workers and the Training Plan for Rural Migrant Workers initiated by the Ministry of Education. Vocational schools and colleges should enlarge their enrolment of rural students and train more rural students. We should give full play to urban and eastern areas in leading and influencing rural and western areas. Urban and rural areas and eastern and western areas should jointly enroll students in line with the principles of cities supporting the development of rural areas, and industry repaying agriculture. Urban and eastern areas should offer more job opportunities for students from rural and western areas. We will continue to push forward the integration of agriculture, science and education and the overall planning of “three Jiaos”, namely basic education, vocational education, and adult education. At the same time, we should organize and implement the Training Plan of Practical Skills in Rural Areas shaped by the Ministry of Education, and speed up urbanization and agriculture modernization.

5. We will encourage industry to run schools and develop non-governmental vocational education to make our education more diversified.

In order to develop vocational education, Central Government urges the governments at all levels on the one hand to play a leading role in running vocational schools, while encourage enterprises to run schools and develop non-governmental vocational schools on the other. We will encourage professional enterprises to run vocational education solely or jointly run schools with vocational schools. We will give priority to non-governmental education when developing vocational education, carry out the Law on Promotion of Private-run Schools of People's Republic of China, and treat private-run vocational schools and government-funded vocational

schools equally. Meanwhile, we should push forward the operating system reform of the government-funded vocational schools actively, immerse and restructure those schools, explore cooperation among enterprises, schools, other educational organizations, civil society, and individuals, and put into practice the school-running models with various funding sources.

6. We will improve the employment access scheme, and build the national vocational education qualification framework.

We will stick to the principles of training before employment and taking workplaces, give priority to those people who have obtained their diplomas of vocational schools and colleges and the certificates of vocational training, improve labor supervision and business administration, and rectify and punish the behaviors violating relevant regulations. We will establish step by step a vocational education qualification framework that can both meet the needs of job-hunting and reflect school features. Students can achieve both school certificates and various employment-oriented certificates preferred by industries, enterprises, and employers. We will take an active part in bringing in qualified international vocational certificates and course systems that have a worldwide reputation and are badly needed in China.

7. We will pool more education resources and develop the vocational education practical training bases to better the vocational education.

By adjusting layout structures and reorganizing resources, we will build a group of large demonstrative vocational schools with favorable school-running conditions and high education level, and grope for new collectivized and chain development models in which high-quality vocational education resources play a leading role, and other vocational schools and training providers participate.

We will concentrate on building practical training bases to deepen the reform of vocational education and to improve the vocational school running conditions. In the future, China will abide by the principles of governments playing a leading role and social sectors participating in school running to build a group of high-quality vocational education practical bases jointly established by the governments, professional enterprises, and vocational schools. Apart from government allowance, we should give full play to the market to widen our fund-pooling channels to build the practical bases. Besides, we will try to build a group of practical training bases with good conditions and complete set of disciplines for some key industries to train skillful people so that the practical skills training bases can help to reform vocational education and to improve education quality.

8. We will deepen the reform of personnel system in vocational schools and colleges and build up a group of “Double Shi” teachers, namely teachers with both theoretical and practical qualities.

Chinese government will deepen the reform of personnel system in vocational schools and carry out the appointment systems for teachers. The administration of teachers will be shifted from identity management to post management gradually. We will encourage the rational flow of skillful people and optimize the tiers of teachers. We will deepen the reform of income distribution system, and stimulate the initiative of the faculty members. We will employ in-

service or retired professional technicians and skillful craftsmen who have rich practical experience from society and enterprises to work as the full-time or part-time teachers and advisors for trainees. At the same time, we will try to establish the teachers' continuing education system that can reflect the vocational education features, and encourage the teachers in vocational schools to obtain relevant professional post qualifications or advanced post qualifications. Teachers from vocational schools are required to practice in enterprises two months every two years otherwise they will not be promoted.

9. We will increase our input to better support the vocational education reform and development.

In order to develop vocational education and to train more skill-oriented talents, we need to increase our input by multiple channels. The Central Government urges governments at all levels to increase the budgetary input, fiscal outlay, and public expenditure of vocational education year by year, devote more funding to vocational schools than to general schools at the same level, and earmark special funding for vocational education. At the same time, we will encourage financial institutions to grant loans to vocational education.

10. We will make great efforts to create a conducive environment for developing vocational education.

To reform and develop vocational education, Chinese government has adopted a series of measures to create a conducive environment for vocational education. Firstly, we will publicize the significances of vocational education and its important position and function in developing national economy and society. Secondly, we will publicize the best practices and great contributions made by the outstanding skill-oriented talents and elevate their sense of professional honor. Thirdly, we will establish the government allowance system for excellent skill-oriented talents, treat skill-oriented talents and scientific and engineering technical talents equally, and elevate their social status. Fourthly, governments at all levels will select advanced vocational education units and individuals every two years, commend and award them. By adopting these measures, we are hoping to promote the custom of each and every profession produces its top experts in society at large, and to create an environment favorable for developing vocational education and training skill-oriented talents.

VI. International Cooperation and Exchanges

The Westernization Movement in China taking place in the second half of 19th century gave chances to the development of China's modern vocational education. Vocational education in China is connected with the outside world from the date it was born. The initial vocational schools mainly taught modern western science and technologies. In the 1950s and 1960s, China's vocational education learned from former Soviet Union and the socialist countries in Eastern Europe and was supported by them. Since China adopted the policy of reform and opening to the outside world, especially since the beginning of the 21st century, the international exchanges and cooperation between China's vocational education and the outside world have made many breakthroughs in both depth and scope as the trend of economic globalization becomes more irresistible.

In the past 20 years, many delegations from central government and local governments visited other countries where vocational education is quite prosperous and unique to borrow successful experience to develop vocational education. In the meanwhile, in order to develop vocational education, China also hosted many international organizations and delegations from other countries and regions, and held researches and discussions with overseas vocational education administrators, policy-makers, experts, and scholars. During this process, thousands of Chinese vocational schools and colleges have communicated and cooperated with or are communicating and cooperating with overseas vocational schools by exchanging information, jointly developing curricular, exchanging teachers, and jointly training students, etc. Hundreds of thousands of vocational education teachers and teaching staff have taken part in or are taking part in exchange programs.

China has established extensive links with international organizations such as World Bank, UNESCO, UNDP, the international Labor Organization, UNFPA, The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and UNICEF, etc. and has conducted a number of cooperation programs to develop vocational education. In 1990 and 1996, Chinese government signed the Agreement on China's Vocational Education Loan Programs with World Bank successively. More than 150 vocational schools benefit from the two programs. The facilities and resources in those schools as well as the China's vocational education as a whole are remarkable improved.

The cooperation between China and UNESCO also yielded many fruits. China is one of the initiating countries of UNEVOC program and has established a national center to implement the program. For many years, China has sent hundreds of Chinese experts and scholars to take part in UNESCO's programs. In 1993 and 1997, China played host to the International Vocational Education Technical Education Symposium and the Rural Area Vocational Education Symposium sponsored by UNESCO. China has facilitated UNESCO to establish the International Rural Area Education Research Center in Boading, China. By doing so, China has made great contributions to UNESCO.

Since the reform and opening to the outside world, China has carried out exchange and cooperation programs with a large number of countries all over the world. Among them, Germany is the country that keeps the longest and largest communication and cooperation with China. Since 1983, supported by Chinese and German governments, the GTZ, the Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung, and the INWENT has come to China successively. They mainly focused on popularizing the dual system, namely to combine the theoretical study in vocational schools with the training practice in enterprises. They have implemented more than 40 cooperative programs in China, conducted dialogue actively with China on vocational education policies, trained a large number of vocational education teachers, and helped to improve the school-running conditions in many vocational schools and colleges. They played an active role in developing and reforming China's vocational education. In 2002, Chinese government and Australian government signed the MOU on Australia-China (Chongqing) Vocational Education and Training Project (ACCVETP). Both countries decided to accomplish the project within 5.5 years to help China to deepen its vocational education reform, especially to encourage more involvement of industries in vocational education and curricular development. China has also conducted fairly intensive cooperation and exchanges with Canada, England, France, Italy, Austria, Belgium, South Korea, and Japan in the sector of vocational education.

Vocational Education in China

China attaches equal importance to cooperating with developing countries as learning from developed countries. In 2001, Chinese government signed the agreement with Ethiopian government and decided to help Ethiopia to develop vocational education. More than 30 person-times experts have been sent to Ethiopia to work for long term. Currently, this cooperative program is still going on. In 2002, China played host to the Asian and African Countries Vocational Education Workshop, introduced our experience in developing the vocational education to more than 10 countries from Asia and Africa, and had extensive discussion and research with them, In addition, Chinese secondary vocational schools have recruited more than 1,000 students from developing countries. All of these are helpful to the development and reform vocational education worldwide. In 2003, Chinese government issued the Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Running Schools and made clear that vocational education would be the priority sector for Chinese-foreign cooperation in running schools. As China's economy, society and education develops quickly, the international exchanges and cooperation between China and the world in vocational education will be even more active and fruitful.