WEP Warwick Evans Publishing

International Journal of Social Sciences and Public Administration

ISSN: 3005-9836 (Print), ISSN: 3005-9585 (Online) | Volume 9, Number 1, Year 2025
DOI: https://doi.org/10.62051/ijsspa.v9n1.11
Journal homepage: https://ijsspa.org

Market-Oriented Reform: Lessons from Rural Water Supply Improvement in Yueqing City (1991–2000)

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ABSTRACT

During China's Eighth and Ninth Five-Year Plans, Yueqing City made remarkable progress in improving rural drinking water and was honored as a "National Model City for Universal Tap Water during the Eighth Five-Year Plan." Its strategies and practices gained broad social recognition. From 1991 to 2000, Yueqing integrated market-oriented principles into rural water supply reform. By expanding regional water supply networks, establishing rural water supply companies with limited liability, and strengthening institutional and managerial frameworks, the city achieved scientific water management, standardized governance, and the commercialization of water supply. These innovations became known as the "Yueqing Experience," a distinctive contribution to the broader rural water reform process in Zhejiang Province.

KEYWORDS

Rural Drinking Water; Market-Oriented; Management System.

1. INTRODUCTION

Food is the foundation of human livelihood, and water is the foundation of food. Ensuring safe drinking water is therefore vital to the health, production, and daily lives of millions. However, China's water resources are distributed unevenly, and natural factors such as climate and terrain combined with socio-economic constraints-meant that many rural areas long suffered from inadequate access to clean and safe drinking water. Since the 1950s, the Chinese government has launched a series of large-scale rural water improvement initiatives, including the "Water Improvement for Disease Prevention," "Drinking Water Relief," "Drinking Water Safety," and "Consolidation and Enhancement of Drinking Water Safety" programs. These efforts sought to fundamentally improve sanitary conditions in rural drinking water supply.

Current scholarship on rural water improvement in China has largely focused on the national level, emphasizing the overall trajectory and general practices of reform, with relatively little attention given to localized case studies. Yet rural drinking water conditions differ significantly across regions, and the strategies and lessons derived from water reform are far from uniform. Therefore, this paper reviews the process of rural drinking water improvement in Yueqing from 1991 to 2000 under the background of the gradual development of socialist market economy. By outlining its key measures, the study highlights the "Yueqing Experience" within the process of rural water reform in Zhejiang Province.

Yueqing City lies along the southeastern coast of Zhejiang Province. The city enjoys a mid-subtropical maritime monsoon climate, characterized by mild temperatures, high humidity, and abundant rainfall year-round. Its territory is traversed by numerous rivers, most of which originate in

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the Yandang Mountains to the northwest. These rivers are typically short and swift, draining southeastward into Yueqing Bay and forming three riverine plains in the southeast: Hongqiao, Lecheng, and Liushi. Despite this abundance, many parts of Yueqing historically suffered from inadequate drinking water, severe pollution, and reliance on bitter or brackish sources.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, Yueqing began its rural water improvement efforts. Over the subsequent decades, these efforts yielded substantial achievements. Particularly between 1991 and 2000, Yueqing embraced the spirit of reform and innovation, exploring a distinctive path of rural water supply development that soon became recognized as a successful model. In 1997, the city was honored by the National Patriotic Health Campaign Committee as a "National Advanced City for Universal Tap Water during the Eighth Five-Year Plan." [1] In December 1999, the Ministry of Personnel, the Ministry of Health, and the State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine jointly awarded the Yueqing Rural Water Improvement Office the title of "National Advanced Collective in the Health System"-the only such distinction ever granted to a local water improvement unit nationwide. That same year, Yin Dakui, then Vice Minister of Health, remarked in an internal bulletin of Health News that "the experience of Yueqing in rural water improvement deserves our close attention."[2]

2. URBANIZATION AS A DRIVER OF RURAL WATER REFORM

In the initial phase of rural water improvement, Yueqing primarily relied on building small, rudimentary village-level water plants. This approach, often described as "one village, one plant," resulted in a fragmented and low-level system of water supply. Most of these township and village plants were small in scale, scattered in layout, and depended heavily on surface sources such as rivers and ponds. Over time, however, growing water pollution, deteriorating pipelines, and outdated supply facilities rendered these systems increasingly inadequate to support Yueqing's socio-economic development and the rising expectations for residents' quality of life.

To address these challenges, Yueqing initiated a second phase of rural water reform. Some plants were decommissioned, while others were reconstructed or expanded to improve supply quality. In parallel, the city invested in large-scale plants that absorbed smaller ones and extended their networks to rural communities. This strategy integrated rural areas into the broader urban water supply system, a model known as "wide-area water supply." In this model, large plants serve as the backbone, linking urban and rural networks through pipeline extensions and mergers, thereby enabling regionalized water provision that capitalizes on economies of scale in both cost and water quality. [3]

(1) Second-Phase Water Reform: Enhancing Supply Quality

In 1982, in response to the United Nations' "International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade," launched at the 35th UN General Assembly in 1981 with the aim of ensuring "safe drinking water for all by 1990," the Chinese government agreed to accept a US$100 million interest-free loan from the World Bank to support rural water projects. Zhejiang Province was among the provinces selected for assessment under this program. [4]

Following intense competition, Yueqing County was chosen in 1985 as one of only 25 rural counties nationwide to receive World Bank loan funding. In April 1986, the Yueqing County People's Government signed a loan agreement with the Zhejiang Provincial Department of Finance and the Provincial Patriotic Health Campaign Committee, securing the first allocation of 3.36 million Special Drawing Rights (SDRs), equivalent to 17 million RMB. The loan program ran from May 1985 to May 1990. [5] With the support of this funding, Yueqing embarked on the construction of sub-project water supply systems in accordance with the World Bank loan agreement.

With the support of World Bank funding, Yueqing constructed numerous new rural water plants and upgraded many existing ones through the second phase of improving rural drinking water sanitation. These efforts significantly improved water supply quality. By 1993, the city operated 122 rural water

plants, serving 632 villages and 780,264 residents-representing 73.54% of the county's total population at the time. In 1994, plants that had previously relied on river water were fully converted to cleaner sources, drawing instead from reservoirs and mountain streams.[6] In 1995, Yueqing was hit by a prolonged six-month drought, leaving 400,000 residents in the Liushi area facing severe water shortages. In response, the city repaired several key plants in Mingdong and Beibaixiang, restoring their production capacity and ensuring that local communities could weather the crisis.

Alongside efforts to shift water plants to cleaner sources, Yueqing placed increasing emphasis on safeguarding its water resources. By the mid-1990s, rural water improvement had evolved from a focus on expanding quantity to enhancing quality-moving beyond the narrow goal of providing sufficient drinking water to integrating water reform with ecological protection and environmental management. The aim was to ensure both higher water quality and safer, more sanitary drinking water for residents.

In 1995, the Yueqing Municipal Government issued the Provisional Regulations on Pollution Prevention and Management in Drinking Water Source Protection Zones and established a leadership group to oversee surface water source protection. Over the next three years, the city designated protection zones in three phases: four reservoirs in 1995 (Shibajie, Xishan, Yanggen, Zhongqian); five in 1996 (Danxi, Shangye, Tashan, Huangjinxi infiltration canal, Jiangyan); and four water plants in 1997 (Yanpan, Yaochuan, Yandang, Dajing).

In parallel, Yueqing took proactive steps to eliminate pollution risks. For example, Danxi Reservoir, located in Shilongtou Village upstream of Hongqiao, faced a threat in early 1995 when a villager illegally established a fiberglass factory without environmental approval. Acting on public reports, the municipal office responsible for safe drinking water convened the environmental, industrial, and township authorities to conduct an on-site inspection, resulting in the factory's closure. Between 1995 and 1997, the city also reinforced the Danxi dam, raised its water level, relocated 1,976 residents from three upstream villages to a planned resettlement area in Hongqiao Town, and zoned an industrial district downstream to keep potential pollution sources away from drinking water reserves.[7]

(2) Integrating Urban and Rural Water Networks: Advancing Wide-Area Water Supply

Yueqing's efforts to integrate urban and rural water supply systems can be traced back to the early stages of rural water reform. In 1964, the Yueqing County Health and Epidemic Prevention Station initiated the construction of the Xishan Water Plant in Lecheng Town. Completed in 1966, the plant introduced public taps, with 24 supply points established to serve the town's residents. Over time, the network expanded across Lecheng, ensuring access to drinking water for the entire community-including both urban and rural residents.

During the Eighth Five-Year Plan, Yueqing accelerated efforts to develop a model in which large-scale water plants would serve as the backbone of rural water improvement. A landmark example was the Liushi Project Water Plant, financed through a World Bank loan, which became the largest of its kind in Zhejiang Province at the time and a pioneering case of wide-area water supply.

In 1988, the Liushi region was the largest plain area in Yueqing County, encompassing 8 towns, 10 townships, 328 administrative villages, and 343 natural villages, with a total population of 343,586. [8] As the population grew and living standards rose, existing facilities could no longer meet demand for either water quality or quantity. To address this, the county government launched the Liushi Project Water Plant. Construction began in September 1987, and by June 1991 the plant was operational. Located at Liao Mountain in Hutou, it drew from Zhongqian Reservoir and supplied both towns and villages through an extensive distribution network. With a daily capacity of 30,000 tons, it served 340,000 residents across 16 townships.

Following its completion, the plant steadily expanded its service coverage. It absorbed four township-level and eleven village-level water plants, and extended pipelines beyond the Liushi area to Yanpan

and Tianyang in Lecheng Town, achieving truly regionalized supply. By the end of 1993, the plant had produced and sold 11.24 million tons of water, benefiting more than 400,000 residents. The Liushi Project Water Plant ended the region's long reliance on rivers, ponds, and wells for drinking water, securing a safer and healthier supply for the population.

The plant also played a vital role in ensuring social stability and supporting economic growth. In recognition, it was named one of China's "Top 100 Rural Water Plants" in 1995 and awarded the title of "Best Economic Efficiency Industrial Enterprise in Zhejiang Province" in 1996. [9]

Beyond the Liushi Project, Yueqing also launched the Nanqingfu Water Diversion Project, another landmark initiative in advancing wide-area water supply during this period. This effort centered on expanding the Furong Town Water Plant while absorbing the smaller facilities in Nantang and Qingjiang, thereby creating the Nanqingfu Project Water Plant. Its distribution network spanned all three towns, delivering high-quality tap water from the Huangjinxi infiltration canal.

The project responded to acute local challenges. In 1994, Nantang's water plant was crippled by seawater intrusion caused by a typhoon, leaving residents without a reliable source of drinking water. Qingjiang's plant, built in 1980 with Malou Reservoir as its source, suffered from chronic shortages during droughts due to limited reservoir capacity. By contrast, the Furong plant, established in 1986 with World Bank loan support, drew on the abundant and clean waters of the Huangjinxi infiltration canal.

To address Nantang's urgent needs, the municipal government approved the Nanqingfu Water Diversion Project in January 1996, expanding the Furong facility to channel water to Nantang and Qingjiang. By January 1998, the new plant had passed initial inspection and was fully operational.

The completion of the Nanqingfu Project not only eliminated Nantang's dependence on bitter, brackish water but also eased chronic shortages in Qingjiang. It proved vital for sustaining social stability and supporting industrial and agricultural growth across the three towns.

In the following years, Yueqing undertook a series of major projects in its most densely populated and economically dynamic plains-Lecheng, Hongqiao, and Liushi. These included the integration of the Lehong Water Supply System, the expansion of the Hongqiao Water Plant, and the construction of the Yanggen Reservoir in Lecheng. In addition, the city extended pipelines and interconnected networks for township plants such as those in Qingjiang and Nanyang, effectively linking urban and rural supply systems. Collectively, these initiatives addressed key shortcomings of Yueqing's early rural water reform, notably the limited supply capacity and unreliable water quality of some smaller plants.

The wide-area water supply model has optimized the allocation of water resources, helping to address regional imbalances in availability, ease supply–demand tensions in tap water provision, and overcome the limitations of fragmented township-level management. In doing so, it has enabled collaborative urban–rural production and allowed urban infrastructure development to serve as a catalyst for rural progress.[10] In Yueqing, rural and urban water systems were never entirely separate; rather, they were interwoven. Through the extension and integration of water networks, towns and villages became part of a unified supply system, with urbanization acting as a powerful driver of rural water reform. Conversely, this "urban-led" model of rural water improvement also reinforced rural urbanization, advancing urban–rural integration in ways that aligned with the broader goals of rural modernization and social development.

3. DEEPENING RURAL WATER REFORM THROUGH MARKET PRINCIPLES

Under the planned economy, rural water improvement was long treated as a purely welfare endeavor. In Yueqing's early efforts, most water plants operated under the so-called "big pot water" model,

where resources were pooled and costs shared collectively. This system was well suited to the historical conditions of the time and made it possible for residents to gain access to clean tap water.

Yet as circumstances evolved, these welfare-based plants revealed serious shortcomings. Without a rational cost-recovery mechanism, they typically charged very low water fees, while incurring high electricity costs and heavy payroll and welfare expenses. As a result, many plants lacked the financial capacity to operate normally or to reinvest in their own development, and gradually fell behind changing needs.

At the same time, the continued expansion of rural water reform demanded significant new investment. The traditional model-relying on limited government subsidies and small-scale public fundraising-proved increasingly inadequate to cover construction and operational costs, leaving the sector mired in chronic financial shortfalls.

In 1992, the 14th National Congress of the Communist Party of China declared the establishment of a socialist market economy as the goal of China's economic reform, reshaping nearly every sphere of national life. Responding proactively, Yueqing took the pioneering step of creating the country's first rural water supply limited liability company. [11]By introducing an internal bulk-supply system within its water plants, the city embedded market-oriented mechanisms into rural water improvement, thereby driving the sector toward deeper and more sustainable development.

(1) Establishing the Yueqing Rural Water Supply Limited Liability Company

As China's socialist market economy expanded rapidly and urbanization gained momentum, Yueqing sought innovative approaches to advance rural water reform. One pressing challenge was chronic funding shortfalls. In 1992, the city's rural water improvement authorities worked with the Municipal Price Bureau to develop a pricing framework. They ultimately decided to set water tariffs for each plant based on investment levels, operational costs, and other relevant factors. This marked a significant step toward the marketization of water pricing in Yueqing's rural water sector.

In November 1994, with authorization from the Yueqing Municipal Government, the Liushi Project Water Plant, Shenhai Water Plant, and Furong Water Plant, together with the Rural Water Improvement Installation Office and the Water Supply Materials Department, jointly founded the Yueqing Rural Water Supply Limited Liability Company. The company introduced unified management and two-tier accounting, marking a decisive shift from extensive, fragmented oversight to more intensive and professionalized operations. By consolidating capital and technology through asset restructuring, it raised its fixed assets to 86.18 million RMB. [12]

Following its creation, the company reorganized former water supply enterprises into a corporate structure. Guided by the principle of "clear property rights and defined responsibilities," it pursued the development of a modern enterprise system by adopting a limited liability model with diversified investment. [13] This approach enabled the company to leverage market mechanisms, attract wider social resources, and strengthen its overall capacity. In accordance with China's Company Law, it also established a board of directors, a board of supervisors, and a professional management team, thereby creating a complete corporate governance framework.

The company exercised macro-level control over the key production factors of its subordinate water plants, ensuring timely provision of capital, technology, and equipment. This approach generated strong economic benefits. In 1997, leveraging its legal status, the Yueqing Rural Water Supply Limited Liability Company secured a 6.4 million RMB loan from the municipal finance bureau, enabling it to repay the entirety of the outstanding World Bank debt on schedule. It went on to invest 56.66 million RMB in completing the second-phase expansion of the Liushi Project Water Plant and closed a funding gap of more than 5 million RMB for the Nanqingfu Water Diversion Project.

In subsequent years, the company absorbed the Yaochuan, Huwu, and Yanpan water plants, further consolidating its strength. The establishment and steady growth of the Yueqing Rural Water Supply

Limited Liability Company marked an important milestone in Yueqing's experiment with the marketization of rural water improvement.

(2) Introducing an Internal Bulk-Supply System

In the early 1990s, Yueqing's water plants adopted a management approach summarized as "independent accounting, self-financing, and sustaining operations through water revenues." At the township level, a performance-based system was put in place: targets were set and contracts signed at the start of each year, while year-end settlements determined profit-sharing. Workers' income was directly tied to the plant's annual economic performance, which successfully boosted staff initiative and motivation to some extent.

Yet as plant operations expanded, this contract-responsibility model proved increasingly inadequate for modern enterprise management. Persistent challenges-most notably high leakage rates and chronic arrears in water payments-emerged as critical bottlenecks for water supply enterprises.

To align with the socialist market economy, enhance efficiency, and bring greater rigor to management, Yueqing progressively refined the internal governance of its rural water supply system. In 1998, the Liushi Project Water Plant became the first to implement an internal bulk-supply system. Under this model, the plant measured water deliveries to its subordinate management offices, and staff performance pay was directly tied to key indicators: supply rate, fee collection rate, and leakage rate.

The system proved highly effective. It clarified operational targets, energized management practices, and steadily improved economic outcomes. By the end of 1999, the leakage rate of the Yueqing Rural Water Supply Limited Liability Company had fallen by 14%, while its fee collection rate had climbed to 98%. These gains significantly strengthened the company's overall financial position.[14]

As the socialist market economy took shape, Yueqing seized the opportunity to chanange the long-held view of rural water supply as a purely welfare service. It advanced a new concept-transforming water from a welfare good into a commodity-and began operating rural water plants according to market principles. Through bold experimentation in financing, governance, and operational mechanisms, Yueqing set its rural water plants on a path of industrialized development. This shift enabled them to "sustain water operations through water revenues and pursue self-development," laying the foundation for the sustainable progress of rural water reform.

4. STRENGTHENING MANAGEMENT AND STANDARDIZING RURAL WATER REFORM

Effective organization and sound management are the cornerstones of success. Rural water reform, as a multifaceted undertaking, requires not only strong institutional frameworks but also well-defined governance systems. In February 1990, Yueqing County held a conference on rural water improvement. Reflecting the guidance of the Central Patriotic Health Campaign Committee and the provincial reform conference-"one hand on construction, the other on management"-the meeting declared that from 1990 onward, the priority of rural water reform must shift from focusing solely on infrastructure to balancing both construction and management. [15]

In the years that followed, Yueqing worked to refine the organizational structures and management practices of its rural water initiatives. These efforts placed the reform on a path of scientific leadership, standardized administration, and efficient operation, providing a robust foundation for advancing market-oriented reforms and deepening the overall development of rural water improvement.

(1) Strengthening Organizational Institutions for Rural Water Reform

Prior to 1983, Yueqing's rural water reform was overseen jointly by the County Health Bureau and the Patriotic Health Office, without a dedicated leadership institution. As reform efforts expanded,

this ad hoc arrangement proved inadequate. In November 1983, the County People's Government established the Yueqing County Rural Water Improvement Leading Group, with a working group under it to coordinate and guide reform activities.

Just one month later, in December, the working group was restructured as the Yueqing County Rural Water Improvement Project Office. This marked a turning point: for the first time, rural water reform in Yueqing had a dedicated leadership and management body. In 1985, the County People's Government approved the Project Office as an independent public-service institution, though it remained co-located with the County Health Bureau. By 1991, the office was renamed the Yueqing County Rural Water Improvement Office, a permanent functional agency of the County Government under the administrative oversight of the Health Bureau. Internally, it established "three divisions and two sections," creating a more comprehensive and well-structured institutional framework.

To safeguard the quality of water supply, Yueqing County established the County Rural Water Improvement Water Quality Testing Center in 1988. This institution was renamed the County Water Quality Testing Center in 1991 and was staffed with trained technicians and equipped with professional instruments to conduct regular monitoring of township-level and larger water plants, while village-level plants underwent testing twice a year. In 1999, the county significantly expanded its investment, acquiring an atomic absorption spectrophotometer and other advanced instruments. These upgrades enhanced testing capacity, improved the overall quality of tap water, and effectively reduced the prevalence of waterborne diseases among local residents.

In 1995, Yueqing created the Rural Water Supply Order Maintenance Inspection Team, tasked with overseeing the operation of rural water plants and the installation of distribution pipelines.

That same year, in May, the city also established the Rural Water Reform Talent Exchange Center, which organized regular training sessions and professional development programs. These initiatives steadily raised the proportion of technically qualified staff within the rural water system. By the end of 1999, employees with college or technical school backgrounds accounted for 73% of the workforce, ensuring a strong human resource foundation for the continued advancement of rural water reform.

(2) Strengthening Regulatory Frameworks for Rural Water Reform

Alongside the institutional "hardware," Yueqing placed equal emphasis on the regulatory "software" that underpinned rural water reform.

In 1993, building on the Zhejiang Provincial Measures for Rural Tap Water Financial Management, the city introduced the Provisional Implementation Rules for Yueqing's Rural Tap Water Financial Management. These established systems of cost accounting and internal auditing, with regular financial reports presented to workers' congresses for oversight. Such mechanisms not only safeguarded the economic efficiency of water plants but also consolidated and expanded the gains of rural water reform.

To further safeguard order in rural water supply, Yueqing issued a series of policy documents. In 1996, following the creation of the Rural Water Supply Order Maintenance Inspection Team, the Municipal Government released the Notice on Protecting Rural Water Supply Facilities and Maintaining Supply Order. It also introduced a User Water Connection Approval System to curb illegal connections and vandalism of facilities, while launching broad public-awareness campaigns to reinforce compliance and preserve system integrity.[16]

Yueqing also worked to refine the governance of its rural water reform system, introducing modern enterprise practices to place water supply enterprises on a more standardized and institutionalized footing. In January 1998, with municipal government approval, the system adopted the Opinions on Merging Selected Departments of the Municipal Water Reform Office and the Rural Water Supply Company as well as the Trial Plan for the Internal Bulk-Supply System at the Liushi Project Water Plant. Later that April, at the inaugural workers' congress of Yueqing Rural Water Supply Co., Ltd., the company passed new regulations-including the Implementation Rules for the Workers' Congress

Ordinance and the Measures for Advancing Spiritual Civilization-aimed at strengthening business management, democratic oversight, and civic culture.

Further reforms followed. In January 1999, the company's second workers' congress adopted the Responsibility System for Spiritual Civilization and the Implementation Opinions on Ethical Conduct. In January 2000, its third congress approved the Detailed Rules for Performance-Based Pay as well as the Plan for Job Knowledge Training, Examinations, and Competitive Recruitment.[17]

These institutional innovations extended across Yueqing's rural water system, where contract-based employment and job rotation gradually replaced the rigid distinctions of the planned economy era. The reforms eliminated the entrenched divide between state and collective employees, and between cadres and workers. All new staff were hired under formal contracts, recruited on the basis of professional qualifications and job requirements, a system that effectively curbed overstaffing and enhanced efficiency.

Rural water improvement is by nature a systematic, long-term, and complex endeavor, involving the environment, government, and local communities. Ensuring its orderly advancement and maximizing its benefits requires strong institutions and effective management. Yueqing has consistently strengthened its leadership framework and regulatory system, developing a comprehensive management regime that covers water quality, supply order, finance, and personnel.

In March 1996, the Zhejiang Provincial assessment team for the "Eighth Five-Year Plan" conducted inspections of Yueqing's Rural Water Reform Office as well as facilities such as the Liushi and Furong water plants. According to Ye Yifu, Deputy Director of the Provincial Rural Water Reform Office and head of the team, Yueqing's office had fully exercised its managerial functions, secured stable water supply, and advanced rural economic development. Zheng Youde, Director of the Water Reform Division under the National Patriotic Health Campaign Committee, also took part in the inspection. He summarized Yueqing's accomplishments as "scientific water management, standardized governance, and the commoditization of water supply."[18]

The emphasis on regulation and management has become a defining characteristic of Yueqing's rural water reform. Through rational institutional design and continuous regulatory development, Yueqing has been able to overcome challenges such as chaotic planning, overlapping directives, and conflicting interests. This has ensured standardized progress, sustained long-term benefits, and consistently enhanced the well-being of its rural population.

5. CONCLUSION

Between 1991 and 2000, Yueqing successfully integrated principles of the socialist market economy into its rural water reform initiatives, yielding remarkable achievements. By August 2000, the city had constructed 188 water plants-178 at the village level, 8 at the township level, and 2 regional facilities. Among these, the Liushi and Nanqingfu projects stood out as key benchmarks. Altogether, 954,921 residents benefited, bringing rural tap water coverage to 93.28%.

This progress ensured that nearly all residents had access to clean and safe drinking water, effectively safeguarding their right to life and health while driving substantial socio-economic development. In September 2000, the National Patriotic Health Campaign Committee led a multi-ministry research delegation on rural water and sanitation reform to Yueqing, selecting the city as a model case for eastern coastal China. The findings provided important input for setting the "Tenth Five-Year Plan" goals for national rural water and sanitation improvement.

Against the backdrop of a rapidly advancing market economy and accelerating urbanization, Yueqing embraced innovation by embedding market mechanisms into rural water management. By harnessing urban resources to drive rural reform and encouraging the participation of multiple social actors, the

city secured both the sustainability and success of its rural water programs. The mobilization of diverse social resources remains a defining feature of the Yueqing experience.

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