

Q: • How are cities creating inclusive learning environments (formal and, in particular, non-formal and informal) that respond to, value and recognize the knowledge and skills of vulnerable groups, including elderly and imprisoned populations?

A: At present, China is facing a serious situation caused by the aging population, while senior education plays a vital role in alleviating those following social problems. Through participating senior learning, the elderly group get updated with new knowledge and technology, kept in pace with the time, ensured mental and physical health, facilitated more social involvement, promoted the cultivation of the elderly human resources.

Since we are familiar with the concepts of formal learning, informal learning and non-formal learning, due to the specific condition of the elderly, most of which are interested in non-formal learning. As far as I know, in china, there are only Shanghai Open University and Jiangsu Open University who have provided formal education available to people who are over 60, in the other large parts of China, senior education mainly focus on non-formal learning.

During recent years, in order to guarantee an inclusive learning environment, Chengdu has made a series of efforts. What we have done are, promulgated a succession of laws and regulation and governmental documents including Ordinance on Promoting Community Education in Chengdu, the Opinions on Promoting Learning City Development in Chengdu and to promote senior education; In 2017, Chengdu has also established a Joint Conference for a Learning City development and Community Education to press ahead this career in a coordinated manner, with the municipal government taking the helm in coordinating 29 municipal-level organs to act as all stockholders; Thirdly, the city has set up a learning service network of 4 levels to provide the elderly group with ample learning spaces and rich learning resources, furthermore, there are thousands of bookstores, libraries and museums for their non-formal learning; also, Chengdu has underlined the accessibility of learning for the elderly group in relatively restrained countryside area, worked out course list suitable for those less-educated group; Last, we have kept organizing various celebrating and demonstrating festivals, learning stars selecting competition, to inspire those excellent senior learners, to set learning models for the young generation and to form rich atmosphere of lifelong learning.

Q: • How does lifelong learning leverage national and local resources to address the learning needs of these vulnerable groups, and which institutions and sectors are participating in the planning and implementation of lifelong learning policies to address these groups?

A: To meet the learning needs of the elderly group, our city have successfully accomplished this

goal by the 3 following measures. Firstly, public regulations and policies are made. For instance, it is regulated in our Ordinance on Promoting Community Education in Chengdu that “Departments such as Civil Affairs, Culture and Press, Administration of elderly should conduct elderly education and training service in the fields of healthcare, knowledge and recreation”, it is described in the Opinions on Promoting Learning City Development in Chengdu that “ Seven municipal should implement elderly education service in administrative communities in a wide range”, it is highlighted in the 3-year Improvement Plan for Learning City Development in Chengdu with a large paragraph titled with “Carrying out an integration development program of elderly group”, and a specific Implementation Opinion on Accelerating the Development of Elderly Education in Chengdu, in which clearly set the guidelines, principles, objectives, main tasks and ensuring measures of how to further push forward this city’s senior learning.

Secondly, it has established a coordinating mechanism involving 29 municipal departments. Every year, a working item list will be issued by Bureau of Education, the executive office of the large Joint-Conference, all the items on that list will be evaluated by the end of a year. The Joint-Conference will hold plenary meeting every year and some updated training as well.

Last, the funding supports. Chengdu will allocate a municipal budget of over 40 million to elderly learning, which is only one main channel, the other funds come from social donation, private sector and partial borne by the elderly themselves.

In terms of institutions and sectors participating, from the aspect of governmental department, Bureau of Education, Bureau of Civil Affairs, Bureau of Culture and Press, Bureau of Retired Public Servants and Commission of Sanitation and Health are mainly involved. Those departments mentioned above had all been the leading department in the field of elderly education early or late during last 30 years, nevertheless, as the process of optimization of working structure and mechanism in senior education currently, especially with the promulgation of China Elderly Education Development Plan(2016-2020), Bureau of Education in various level are entitled the leading position in all governmental sectors.

While from the aspect of institution, Chengdu Open University for Elderly, Chengdu Community College, and Chengdu Elderly College and their branch institutions at various level, together with those elderly college held or sponsored by formal universities, state enterprises, social organizations.