

Preface

Urbanization and urban development will leave a deep imprint on structural, social, and economic change in China for decades to come. In 2007 the urban share of China's population was almost 44 percent, and the urban economy accounted for nearly 80 percent of domestic output. Both these percentages will be rising, the first steeply, the second much more gently, because the urban sector is already the dominant economic force.

Given these changes, the urban dimension figures prominently in China's 11th Five-Year Plan. Urban issues were also central to the World Bank's study, *China's Development Priorities*, by Shahid Yusuf and Kaoru Nabeshima, prepared in close consultation with China's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC). The chapters in this volume were initially prepared for that study. They were subsequently revised and updated in order to incorporate feedback received in seminars and discussions in China and to reflect the latest research.

The chapters, all written by leading specialists on China, examine key facets of the urbanization process, highlighting both the challenges for and options open to policy makers. By stitching together the implications of migration, poverty, urban financing, governance, energy use, and water consumption, the chapters provide an integrated perspective on the recent past and the medium-term outlook for urban change in China.

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