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Abstract

The growth of Chinese social organizations has attracted attention from researchers and practitioners because it reflects the changing state-society relations in post-Mao China and has profound implications for the country's political development. As a mediating structure between the state and citizens, they are supposed to represent their constituencies in the policy arena.

The existing research records many social organizations' policy activities. However, do all social organizations engage in such activities? If not, what organizations are active, less active, or inactive? Furthermore, what factors shape their different behaviors and determine different levels of policy influence? Regarding organizations with policy engagement, what strategies do they employ to influence policies? The scholarship on Chinese social organizations concentrated on state-organization relations over an extended period. What are the impacts of state-organization relations on organizations' policy influence? Do these impacts change with state leadership succession? This research addresses these questions by investigating whether and how Chinese social organizations influence public policies and exploring the factors shaping their policy influence.

Combining deductive and inductive methods, this research develops an analytical framework after investigating the women's and health fields and tests it in five other organizational fields—migrant workers, disability, minors, seniors, and the environment. This framework is adequately valid because no organizations operate outside the six modes of policy (non)influence defined in the framework: active state corporatism, passive state corporatism, symbolic state corporatism, embedded pluralism, critical pluralism, and silent pluralism. It applies the civil

society/state corporatism approaches to analyzing social organizations' policy influence in China, stitching academic traditions of state-society relations and social organizations' policy influence.

Using quantitative data collected from original surveys, this research explores multiple factors shaping organizations' policy influence and tests three leading theories in the existing body of literature—resource mobilization theory, institutional theory, and resource dependence theory. The empirical evidence supports the former two but fails to verify the latter. It fills the gap in the existing literature by testing two underexamined or unexplored factors—formalization and professionalization of organizations and international connections—and finds their significantly positive effects on policy influence. Furthermore, qualitative data show that the size of organizational constituencies and descriptive representation do not impact organizations' policy influence.

Encompassing and comparing seven fields of social organizations, this research draws a panoramic picture of and provides more comprehensive insights into the policy influence of Chinese social organizations. It is the first comparative study on the policy influence of China's top-down social organizations and both engagement and non-engagement in the policy process. In addition to collaborative strategies, this research discloses that many organizations adopt(ed) non-collaborative strategies to influence policies and names this policy influence mode critical pluralism. In the Xi Jinping era, critical pluralism disappeared from all fields except the environmental field. This research applies institutional theory and the theory of political opportunity structures to explain this unique finding.

Overall, this research discloses the dynamics of state-society relations in contemporary China. On the one hand, the Xi Jinping administration cracked down on many social organizations, especially those embracing critical pluralism. On the other hand, it selectively encourages the

development of certain types of social organizations and takes a relatively mild attitude toward those adopting embedded pluralism and silent pluralism. In the Xi era, the space to influence policies is not completely closed although the political environment has become more restrictive. To carve out more space and achieve more influence in the policy process, social organizations in China must learn how to dance well in chains.

Dancing in Chains: Policy Influence of Social Organizations in China

by

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B.E., Peking University, 1998

M.L., Peking University, 2004

Dissertation

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACEF	All China Environment Federation
ACFTU	All China Federation of Trade Unions
ACFIC	All China Federation of Industry and Commerce
ACLA	All China Lawyers Association
ACWF	All China Women's Federation
ADVN	Anti-domestic Violence Network of China Law Society
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AITA Foundation	The AITA Foundation for Animal Protection Beijing
Aizhixing	Aizhixing Institute of Health Education
ARB	Animal Rescue Beijing
ARV	Antiretroviral
ASEAN	The Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BBS	bulletin board system
BCDC	The Beijing Cultural Development Center for Rural Women
BCLARC	Beijing Children's Legal Aid and Research Center
Beijing 1+1	One Plus One (Beijing) Disabled Persons' Cultural Development Center
Beijing Huiling	Beijing Huiling Community Services for People with Learning Disabilities
BGC	Beijing Green Cross
Birch Woods	Birch Woods National Alliance of PLWHA
Brick and Tile	Brick and Tile Migrant Workers Culture Development Center
Brooks	Beijing Brooks Education Center
CADF	China Ageing Development Foundation
CAGG	China Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics
CAGR	Chinese Association of Geriatric Research
CALC	Chinese Association for Life Care
CAP+	China Alliance of People living with HIV/AIDS
CAS	Chinese Academy of Science
CASAPC	Chinese Association of STD and AIDS Prevention and Control
CASS	Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
CASST	China Association of Senior Scientists and Technicians
CAST	China Association for Science and Technology
CASWSS	China Association of Social Welfare and Senior Service
CAUA	China Association of the Universities for the Aged
CAWA	Chinese Aging Well Association
CBCGDF	China Biodiversity Conservation and Green Development Foundation
CBO	community based organizations
CCCA	Community Conservation Concession Agreement
CCM	Country Coordinating Mechanism

CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CCS	Center for Climate Strategies
CCTV	China Central Television
CCYL	the China Communist Youth League
CDC	Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention
CDPF	China Disabled Persons' Federation
CDRS	the China Disability Research Society
CEC	China Ecological Civilization Research and Promotion Association
CECPA	China Environmental Culture Promotion Association
CEDAW	the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CFCA	The Chinese Felid Conservation Alliance
CFDP	China Foundation for Disabled Persons
CFES	China Family Education Society
CFHPC	Chinese Foundation for Hepatitis Prevention and Control
CFPA	China Family Planning Association
CFPSA	Chinese Foundation for Prevention of STD and AIDS
CHAIN	China HIV/AIDS Information Network
CHCN	China HIV/AIDS CBO Network
China-Dolls	China-Dolls Center for Rare Disorders
CLAPV	Center for Legal Assistance to Pollution Victims
CMTHF	China Male Tongzhi Health Forum
CMWA	China Medical Women's Association
CNature	CNature Conservation Association
CNCA	China National Committee on Ageing
CNCC	China National Children's Center
CNCCC	China National Committee on Care for Children
COAP	China Orchid AIDS Project
COVID-19	Novel Coronavirus Disease-2019
CPMA	Chinese Preventive Medicine Association
CPPCC	Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference
CRC	the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CRWA	China River Watch Alliance
CSAPA	China Small Animal Protection Association
CSBT	Chinese Society of Blood Transfusion
CSF	Chinese Society of Forestry
CSIA	China Silver Industry Association
CSJDPR	Chinese Society for Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Research
CSPA	China Senior Professors Association
CSSWC	Chinese Society of Soil and Water Conservation

CSW	commercial sex workers
CWA	Clean Water Alliance
CWCA	China Wildlife Conservation Association
CWRW	Chinese Women's Rights Workshops
CYCAN	China Youth Climate Action Network
CYCRC	China Youth & Children Research Center
CYDF	China Youth Development Foundation
CZWA	China Zero Waste Alliance
DWW	Department of Women Workers
EDSI	Enable Disability Studies Institute
EEBCUS	Environmental Education Base for Chinese University Students
EFRC	Environment Friends Research Center for Science and Technology
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EPILs	Environmental Public Interest Litigations
Equality	Beijing Equality Women's Rights Institute
Facilitator	Beijing Social Work Development Center for Facilitators
Fanbao	Beijing Fanbao Cultural Development Co., Ltd
Fengtai Lizhi	Beijing Fengtai Lizhi Rehabilitation Center
FDI	Fuping Development Institute
FON	Friends of Nature
FVIII	Human Coagulation Factor VIII
FWCW	United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women
GAD	Gender and Development in China
GCA	the Green Choice Alliance
GEI	Global Environmental Institute
GEV	Green Earth Volunteers
GFWI	Global Fund Watch Initiative
GH	Beijing Green Hope Environmental Culture Development Center
Global Fund	Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
GMOs	genetically modified organisms
God-Gifted Garden	God-Gifted Garden Art Therapy Center for People with Learning & Mental Disabilities
Golden Key	Golden Key Research Center of Education for the Visually Impaired
GONGO	Government-organized non-governmental organization
Green Beagle	Green Beagle Environment Institute
Green Camp	Green Camp of University Students in China
GSEAN	Green Society Environmental Action Network
GSGFP	Grassroots Self-government on Family Planning
GSK	GlaxoSmithKline

Guangdong Huiling Foundation	Guangdong Huiling Foundation Facilitating Persons with Mental Disabilities
GVB	Global Village of Beijing
HBV	hepatitis B virus
Hetong	Hetong Elderly Welfare Association, Hetong Elderly Welfare Foundation, and Hetong Private Non-enterprise Entities
HHC	Hemophilia Home of China
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
Hongdandan	Beijing Hongdandan Cultural Service Center for the Visually Impaired
Hualing	Hualing Smart Elderly Care Industry Development Center
Huashou	Huashou Home Community Service Development Center
IDUs	injecting drug users
IED	Institute for Environment and Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
INGOS	international non-governmental organizations
IPE	Institute of Public and Environmental Affairs
ITPC-China	International Treatment Preparedness Coalition (China Region)
LGBTQ	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer
Little Bird	Little Bird Mutual-Aid Hotline for Migrant Workers
Love Save	
Pneumoconiosis	the Charity Fund of Love Save Pneumoconiosis
MEP	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Migrant Workers' Home	Beijing Migrant Workers' Home Cultural and Development Center
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs
MOC	Ministry of Commerce
MOCA	Ministry of Civil Affairs
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOH	Ministry of Health/ National Health and Family Planning Commission/ National Health Commission
MOHRSS	Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security
MOHURD	Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
MOPS	Ministry of Public Security
MSF	Medicins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders)
MSG	Mangrove Support Group
MSM	men who have sex with men
MSW	male sex workers
NCAIDS	National Center for AIDS/STD Control and Prevention
NDRC	National Development and Reform Commission
NGO	non-governmental organization

NPC	National People's Congress
NPFPC	National Population and Family Planning Commission
NPO	nonprofit organization
NRDC	Natural Resources Defense Council
NWCAO	National Working Committee on Aging Office
NWCCW	National Working Committee on Children and Women
NWGS	Network for Women's and Gender Studies
OI	Osteogenesis Imperfecta
On Action	On Action Beijing International Cultural Center the Law on the Administration of Activities of Overseas Non-Governmental Organizations within Mainland China
ONGO Law	the Program of Community Intervention in Domestic Issues
PCIDI	Platform for Action
PFA	people living with HIV/AIDS
PLWHA	political opportunity structures
POS	principal recipient
PR	the People's Republic of China
PRC	the Pearl River Delta
PRD	Red Cross Society of China
RCSC	Rock Environment and Energy Institute
REEI	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SARS	State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission
SASAC	State Council AIDS Working Committee
SCAWC	SEE Conservation and SEE Foundation
SEE	
SEE	
Conservation	Society of Entrepreneurs & Ecology
SFA	State Forestry Administration
SFDA	State Food and Drug Administration
Shanshui	SHANSHUI Conservation Center
SIPO	State Intellectual Property Office
Sinian	Sinian Gongyi Information Technology Center
SR	sub-recipient
Stars and Rain	Beijing Stars and Rain Education Institute for Autism
STD	sexually transmitted disease
Sunshine	
Doctors	Beijing Sunshine Doctors Consulting Service Center
Sun Village	Beijing Sun Village Children's Education & Consultancy Center
TDF	Tenofovir
the Certificate	the Certificate of Health for Practitioners in the Food Industry
the Disabled	
Persons' Law	the Law on the Protection of Disabled Persons

the Maple Center	the Maple Women’s Psychological Counseling Center
the Minors’ Law	the Law on the Protection of Minors
the Seniors’ Law	the Law on the Protection of Rights and Interests of the Elderly
the Women’s Law	the Law on the Protection of Women’s Rights and Interests
TRIPS	The Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
UN	The United Nations
UNAIDS	the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNESCO	the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	the United Nations Children’s Fund
VCT	voluntary counseling and testing
Walking in the World	Beijing Xingzai Renjian Culture Development Center
WEG	Women’s Environmental Group
Weizhiming	Hangzhou Weizhiming Organization
WHO	World Health Organization
WNAC	Women’s Network against AIDS—China
WSIC	Women’s Studies Institute of China
WTO	World Trade Organization
YFAG	the Young Feminist Activism Group
Yilian	Beijing Yilian Legal Aid and Research Center of Labor
Yirenping	Beijing Yirenping Center
Yuanzhong	Beijing Yuanzhong Gender Development Center
Zhicheng	Beijing Zhicheng Migrant Workers’ Legal Aid and Research Center
Zhiguang	Beijing Zhiguang School of Special Education and Training
Zhongyi	Zhongyi Aging Development Center
Zhongze	Beijing Zhongze Women’s Legal Counseling and Service Center

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Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

Since 1978, the People's Republic of China (PRC) has experienced massive economic and social changes. With the implementation of the reform and opening up policy, economic freedom and social space have increased, and social interests have become more diversified. One of the consequences of these changes is the emergence or restoration of various social organizations. After more than four decades of remarkable growth, the Chinese nonprofit sector has become an important force in social service delivery and the public policy process (Lu and Dong 2018, 1348). As of the end of 2022, 891 thousand social organizations were registered with the Ministry of Civil Affairs (MOCA) agencies, and these organizations engaged 11.08 million employees and 108.53 billion RMB donations.¹ The topic of Chinese social organizations has attracted much attention from researchers and practitioners because it reflects the changing state-society relations in post-Mao China and has profound implications for the country's political development.

As an important mediating structure between the state and citizens, social organizations act as social change agents to represent their constituencies in the policy arena. Through policy activities, nonprofits help empower citizens, inform policymakers of important public needs, bring the voices of marginal populations into the policy process, and propose policy solutions on behalf of constituencies. Therefore, policy advocacy has been widely recognized as a defining feature of the nonprofit sector (Lu 2018, 179S). Focusing on the role of Chinese social organizations in the policy process, this research will study whether and how these organizations influence public policies and explore the factors shaping their policy influence. The existing research records many

¹ See pages 9 and 11 of the Statistical Bulletin on the Development of Civil Affairs (2022) released by the Ministry of Civil Affairs. It is available at <https://www.mca.gov.cn/n156/n2679/c1662004999979995221/attr/306352.pdf>, accessed October 5, 2023.

social organizations' policy activities. However, do all social organizations engage in such activities? If not, what organizations are active, less active, or inactive? Furthermore, what factors shape their different behaviors and determine different levels of policy influence? Regarding organizations with policy engagement, what strategies do they employ to influence policies? The scholarship on Chinese social organizations concentrated on state-organization relations over an extended period. What are the impacts of state-organization relations on organizations' policy influence? Do these impacts change with state leadership succession? This research attempts to address these questions.

The past four decades have witnessed dramatic economic development and social transformation in China while the political regime remains authoritarian. This endogenous conflict has become more evident in recent years as winners and losers in the reform era are increasingly differentiated and hostile to each other. Mass incidents (*qunti shijian*), such as strikes, demonstrations, and even riots, arose rapidly thanks to economic inequality, deprivation of properties, environmental deterioration, ethnic conflicts, social discrimination, and other sociopolitical contradictions and tensions. Without adequate and effective mechanisms of interest representation, citizens will resort to extraordinary means destabilizing social orders, stifling further economic development, and imperiling the Party-state's rule. As a response, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) launched limited reforms, providing the public with some opportunities to expand civil rights and influence public policies (Gueorguiev 2021, 57-65).

Under these circumstances, many social organizations have started representing the interests of their constituencies and participating in the policy process. The experience of Chinese social organizations will enrich our knowledge of developing a civil society under a restrictive political environment. Furthermore, by exploring the approaches various organizations employ to

influence policies and the factors shaping organizational policy influence, this research will inspire practitioners to design organizational strategies and capacity-building programs.

The following section reviews the evolution of the literature on state-society relations in China and the development of research on the policy influence of Chinese social organizations. The second section introduces state regulation of social organizations in China as background information. The third section specifies the design of this research and presents the analytical framework this research develops and tests. This section will also elucidate some critical concepts applied in this research and discuss the relationship between this research and the existing literature. The last section briefly previews the content of this research.

1.1 Research on Chinese Social Organizations

1.1.1 The Evolution of the Literature on State-society Relations in China

The interest of scholars and practitioners in Chinese social organizations originated from the democratization of former communist countries in Eastern Europe and the Tiananmen Square demonstrations in 1989. Since then, two analytical models, civil society versus state corporatism, have emerged in the literature to understand the nature of Chinese social organizations and the change in state-society relations in the reform era. Debates centering on the fit of these models dominated the research agenda in this field. Although a few researchers claimed that these models were inadequate to explain the changing state-society relations in contemporary China, they concentrated on developing variants of these models.

The civil society model arose after the Tiananmen Square demonstrations in 1989. Drawing from the experience of the democratic transition of former East European communist countries, some scholars argue that a nascent civil society is also forming in China and will serve as a competitive and even confrontational power to the state and facilitate China's democratization (Strand, 1990; Gold, 1990; Whyte, 1992; Wakeman, 1993). For example, comparing Tiananmen

with the May 4th movement in 1919 and with political unrest in some former communist countries in Eastern Europe, Strand (1990) finds that an autonomous civil society played a crucial role in all these movements. He argues that a halting reemergence of a civil society suggests the potential for independent authority over politics (Strand 1990, 18). Wakeman (1993, 112) also argues that the Tiananmen demonstrations showed incipient elements of civil society, and in terms of social practice, civil society and the public sphere may afford a better understanding of recent events in China. As Saich (1994, 260) points out, an increasing number of non-Chinese scholars became interested in the rise or reemergence of civil society in China in the 1980s and argued that it was an important component or even the precursor of democratization in China. Proponents of the civil society model apply a liberal concept that reflects the emergence and functions of civil society in Western countries. According to this concept, civil society is an aggregation of autonomous social organizations composed of voluntary members. The goal of the organizations is to protect or extend the interests or values of their members. Civil society reflects the desire to curb the power of overweening states through a sphere of social organizations enjoying more or less autonomy from the state (White 1993, 64).

However, it was soon found that the evidence was limited to support the view that China's associations in the early 1990s were autonomous from the state and operated freely to express their constituencies' interests. As an alternative to the civil society model, some scholars employed the concept of corporatism to explain state-society relations in contemporary China. According to this model, the rise of associations is seen not as an indication of receding state power but as an evolution away from direct state control to indirect state coordination (Gallagher 2004, 420). Unger and Chan were among the first advocates of this concept. They contend that the civil society framework assumes too much independence in associational life, which did not exist in Deng's

China. Instead, state corporatism provides a more accurate description of what has emerged in China (Unger and Chan 1995, 39). Nevitt (1996, 26) also criticizes that the civil society approach largely assumes an antagonistic relationship between a pro-democracy civil society and the authoritarian Party-state. However, insofar as a civil society can actually be identified, the interests of its membership may, in fact, lie more with the preservation of the authoritarian state than with democratization. Case studies that uncover a state corporatist structure include Chan's (1993) investigations on trade unions in post-Mao China and Pearson's (1994) study on business associations in the foreign capital-invested industrial sector. Most scholars have used the term corporatism as defined by Schmitter². According to the definition, state license, representational monopoly, compulsory membership, hierarchically ordered structure, cooperation between associations and the state, and state-controlled decision-making power are the key characteristics of social organizations under a corporatist arrangement.

In fact, the civil society approach embodies an optimistic view on the changes in state-society relations in China by emphasizing the independent role of social organizations that protect social members from the intrusion of state power. On the contrary, the corporatism model provides a pessimistic view of the influence of social organizations that preserve authoritarianism. In order to facilitate democratization, these incorporated organizations must evolve from the state corporatist structure to more liberal ones that allow them to become more separate from the state. For example, White (1993) and White et al. (1996) argue that corporatist arrangement will develop into civil society due to the dynamics of economic reform and development, while Unger and Chan (1995) embrace the idea that China will shift from state corporatism to societal corporatism in the

² The original definition of corporatism is that corporatism is a system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organized into a limited number of singular, compulsory, non-competitive, hierarchically ordered, and functionally differentiated categories, recognized or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls on their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and supports (Schmitter 1974, 93-94).

future.

With a deepening understanding of Chinese social organizations, many researchers began to doubt the application of the corporatism model in the Chinese context. Various studies have shown that the state-society relations in China are much more complicated than the model describes. After examining the development of trade associations and social service organizations, Ma (2002) concludes that the Party-state is withdrawing from responsibilities towards society, and its capacity to control the growth of organizations is declining. Saich (2000, 125) points out that social organizations have devised strategies to negotiate with the state a relationship that maximizes their members' interests or circumvents or deflects state intrusion. To evade the tight control measures, a social organization may register as a business under the relevant industrial and commercial bureau. It can also register as a "secondary organization" affiliated with another organization or institution. Some groups do not register at all. Howell (2004, 143) notes the advent of a new phase which is characterized, first, by the emergence of a new stratum of organizations concerned with the interests of marginalized groups in society and second, by the proliferation of institutional forms shaped to circumvent onerous state restrictions on associations. Therefore, she contends that the corporatist framework fails in part because it is a unitary response to an increasingly diverse and differentiated reality, a modernist response to a postmodern reality (Howell 2004, 163).

Considering the complicated state-society relations in China, some scholars advocate variants of these models. For example, Ding (1998, 46) finds that "local corporatism" is helpful in the discussion about China. Ru (2004) creates the term "agency corporatism" to accentuate the role of supervisory agencies involved in implementing state controls. Other scholars turn to some eclectic models, which contain elements of both civil society and corporatism models, to explain

what is happening in China. Huang (1993) creates the notion of “the third realm.” He (1997) defines the nature of China’s civil society as “semi-civil society.” Frolic (1997) uses the term “state-led civil society.” Ma (2006) mentions the term “civil society with Chinese characteristics.” Some researchers advocate the application of frameworks encompassing multi-models. For example, Ding (1998) proposes that China’s state-society relations are best explained by combining four models: state corporatism, societal corporatism, civil society, and local corporatism. Ru (2004) creates a continuum of state-society relations composed of five models: state corporatism, agency corporatism, societal corporatism, self-censored civil society, and confrontational civil society.

Other researchers still focus on state-society relations in China but turn to alternative frameworks, enabling an understanding of the nuanced, complex, and multi-layered relations between the autocratic state and civil society (Huang 2018, 378). Wang et al. (2015, 419) generalize the theoretical development as the contingent approach, which commonly argues that the characteristics of Chinese non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are the results of the mutual adaptation and co-evolution of the state and the society in their respective contexts. Shieh (2009) develops a dynamic framework to replace the framework of civil society and corporatism. This framework views the state-society relationship through three modes of interaction: regulation, negotiation, and societalization. Lu (2009) distinguishes organizational autonomy from independence. She finds that many organizations enjoy a remarkable degree of operational autonomy, although they depend heavily on the state for various resources, including information, project implementation, and legitimacy. Therefore, she creates the notion of “dependent autonomy” to summarize the general pattern of state-organization relations in China. Spires (2011) explains the survival of Chinese grassroots organizations in an authoritarian regime by creating the concept

of “contingent symbiosis” characterized by mutual suspicion and mutual need. Teets (2014) develops a hybrid model of state-society relations named “consultative authoritarianism,” merging the ideas of pluralism and autonomy in theories of civil society with the idea of state control in corporatist theories. In this model, governments and social organizations establish cooperative relationships by learning from experiences with each other. To reap the benefits in service delivery, development, and policy innovation offered by social organizations while minimizing the danger of these groups challenging state authority and social stability, government officials allow for relatively independent social organizations but simultaneously seek to control these organizations through a system of state management, which consists of sophisticated and indirect tools characterized by positive and negative incentives to punish certain activities while encouraging others. One positive incentive is access to policymaking, i.e., selected groups possess channels for limited participation in the policy process (Teets 2014, 36).

In this body of literature, some scholars focus on social organizations’ strategies for dealing with the state. Hildebrandt (2013) distinguishes “self-limiting” groups from “co-opted” groups and “oppositional” ones. These organizations strategically adapt to political, economic, and personal opportunities dominated by the state by limiting their behaviors and conforming to the needs and interests of the state. He deems most social organizations as “self-limiting” groups and describes their relationship with the state as “codependent.” Hsu and Jiang (2015) identify two resource strategies social organizations have adopted—state alliance versus state avoidance, depending on the institutional experience of their founders. Former state bureaucrats build organizations around alliances with party-state agencies to access state resources. In contrast, founders without party-state experience usually avoid the state and seek areas away from government control/attention, such as the internet or private business. Both types of organizations refrain from criticizing the

government or officials. As Gleiss et al. (2019, 9) conclude, these choices can be placed on a continuum ranging from actively seeking to develop formal or informal ties with state actors to avoiding the state altogether and adopting a lower profile.

Other scholars in this body of literature underline the state's strategies for handling social organizations or society in general. Kang and Han (2008) propose the concept of a "system of graduated controls," in which the state implements various control strategies over different types of social organizations according to their different capabilities to challenge the state and the characteristics of public goods they provide. Like Teets (2014), Hsu and Hasmath (2014, 2016) argue that the Chinese state has moved away from a strategy of overt coercion or overt sanctioning to manage social organizations to one of tacit sanctioning, whereby the state creates and mediates the space for NGOs to operate. Huang's (2018) quantitative study suggests that the Chinese state tends to exercise a form of floating control over civil society organizations by manipulating the institutional space in response to internal and external threats. Economic performance, natural disasters, and sociopolitical instabilities are critical factors affecting the institutional space for the civil society sector in China. Sun (2022) uses the trialism conception of state-civil society organizations-individuals to show that the state could create conditions that reduce the confidence of individual citizens in civil society organizations and thus control the society from the bottom up without applying direct repressions. Sun (2023) establishes an interactive authoritarianism model to generalize the state's approach in governing civil society organizations. This model involves three stages: toleration, differentiation, and legalization. In the first stage, the state tolerates and observes specific new civil society activities instead of cracking down on them immediately. In the second stage, the state separates regime-challenging organizations from regime-supporting ones. Accordingly, it represses the former while supporting the latter. In the last

stage, the state codifies useful practices into laws and policies to solidify a new status quo order. Gueorguiev (2021) notes the parallel increase in government responsiveness and repression taking place in contemporary China. He characterizes the state's governance strategy as "controlled inclusion," which balances inclusion and coercive control to achieve further efficiencies in both.

After years of exploration, scholars studying Chinese social organizations have achieved some agreements. First, as far as the distance between social organizations and the state is concerned, different social organizations have different degrees of autonomy. Second, the state maintains control over the nonprofit sector to minimize the potential risk of destabilizing the regime on the one hand and encourages the sector's service function to advance social welfare on the other hand (Lu and Dong 2018, 1356). Finally, China is a moving target (Kennedy 2005, 174); that is to say, theoretical constructions must keep up with China's rapidly changing social reality. As Howell (2004, 164) argues, the application of these models has also highlighted their limits in describing and explaining an increasingly complex and fluid social reality.

The debates on the application and fitness of various frameworks dominated the research on China's social organizations and state-society relations for several decades. This research agenda aims to understand the nature of Chinese social organizations by focusing on their organizational autonomy. Although the agenda has enriched the understanding of Chinese social organizations and their relations with the state, it neglects the practical operations of these organizations and the consequences of state-society relations on their operations. In other words, focusing on the question of "what they are," the agenda fails to address the question of "what they do." Hsu (2016, 154) points out that one of the problems with the civil society/state corporatism approaches is their limited ability to explain actual organizational behavior. By focusing primarily on the issue of autonomy from the state, these approaches fail to realize that other motivations and

mechanisms may be shaping the actions of these actors. Just because autonomy is a central concern for scholars does not mean that it is a central concern for organizational actors. As Kennedy (2005, 8-9) argues, these frameworks, as ideal types, are starting points and not ending points. The development of social organizations and China's changing reality called for a research agenda shift from model-oriented to issue-oriented.

1.1.2 Agenda Shift and the Development of Research on the Policy Influence of Chinese Social Organizations

In the last decade, the agenda shift gradually took shape. Hsu and Hasmath (2016, 1) note that scholarly attention on Chinese NGOs has moved from macro investigations into state-society engagement into detailed ethnographic accounts of how NGOs operate and their day-to-day functions. Zhang and Guo (2021a, 224) are also aware that scholarly attention has turned from grand conceptualization with one single concept to detailed accounts of the specific actions of Chinese nonprofits vis-à-vis the government. Research on Chinese social organizations has extended to organizational leadership, management, fundraising, and relationships with non-state actors such as the media and firms. Some studies focus on providing services, including the new area of social work, while other studies center on influencing public policies. Therefore, this increasingly diversified new research agenda covers these two main operational functions of social organizations.

In fact, Chinese social organizations have started to influence public policies since their early years. According to a nationwide survey conducted by the NGO Research Center at Tsinghua University, 58.7% of 1,508 organizations under investigation submitted policy proposals to the governments in 1998, and more than 40% of these organizations showed that some of their proposals had been adopted by the governments (Wang et al. 2001, 23). However, concentrating on state-organization relations over a relatively long period, the scholarship on Chinese social

organizations started to treat the policy influence of social organizations as one of the focal areas only in the last decade. Many relevant issues remain underexamined or unexplored.

In the early stage, although some studies on Chinese social organizations involved influencing policies, they generally targeted state-society relations and treated organizations' policy activities as collateral evidence supporting their primary goals (Ho, 2001, 2008a, 2008b; Howell, 2000, 2003, 2004; Kaufman, 2009; Tang and Zhan, 2008; Yang, 2005; Zhang, 2009a, 2009b). Only three works included significant efforts to investigate the policy influence of Chinese social organizations. Focusing on the business sector in China, Kennedy (2005) studies lobbying in the sector as a whole, with the lobbying of trade associations as just a part of it. Wexler et al. (2006) investigate the awareness of Chinese NGOs on advocacy and the venues through which they engage in advocacy activities. However, the study overemphasizes the conceptualization of advocacy but fails to provide concrete cases and explanations. Mertha (2008) details three anti-hydropower campaigns against the Pubugou, Dujiangyan, and Nu River projects, including extensive policy actions of a few prominent environmental organizations. He theorized his findings in the next few years as "fragmented authoritarianism 2.0." Mertha (2009) argues that although the fragmented authoritarianism framework still captures the rules of the policymaking process³, the process has become increasingly pluralized thanks to rapid socioeconomic change and the diverse demands of Chinese society. Barriers to entry to the policy process have been lowered for new "policy entrepreneurs," such as peripheral officials, NGOs, individual activists, and the media.

³ The fragmented authoritarianism framework argues that the authority below the very peak of the Chinese political system is fragmented and disjointed; therefore, it is often necessary to achieve agreement among an array of bodies, where no single body has authority over the others (Lieberthal 1992, 8). As a result, the interactions between bureaucracies and top leaders and between different agencies will largely shape policy outcomes. As Mertha (2009, 996) puts it, the framework asserts that policy made at the center becomes increasingly malleable to the parochial organizational and political goals of various vertical agencies and spatial regions charged with enforcing that policy. Outcomes are shaped by the incorporation of the interests of the implementation agencies into the policy itself. Fragmented authoritarianism thus explains the policy arena as being governed by incremental change via bureaucratic bargaining.

In addition, policy entrepreneurs' ability to frame the issues effectively explains different policy outcomes. Furthermore, he points out that these policy entrepreneurs' participation in the policy process has a reinforcing effect: once their efforts contribute to a demonstrably successful outcome without drawing prohibitive sanctions, the result is more—rather than less—policy entrepreneurship in the future (Mertha 2010, 72). These studies confirmed that social organizations were increasingly playing a role in the policy process and paved the way for treating social organizations' policy influence as a focal topic.

Research on Chinese social organizations' policy influence has increased in the last decade (Ward et al. 2023, 1219). Providing various cases of organizations' policy actions, these studies discovered that many social organizations in China engaged in policy-related activities. A few of them investigated the effectiveness of some policy actions by tracing relevant policy outcomes. For example, applying the theory of political opportunity structures (POS), Xie and Van Der Heijden (2010) compare the campaign against the Three Gorges Dam and that against the Nu River Dam project. They find that the changed POS in China provided significant points of access for the latter campaign, which explains its different dynamics and positive outcomes. Employing the advocacy coalition framework, Han et al. (2014) identify a societally based environmental coalition and a state-centered development coalition in the decision-making process of the Nu River hydropower project and analyze the struggle and strategic learning between these coalitions that led to the suspension of the project. Du (2012) compares the different outcomes of two campaigns, namely domestic violence in the revision of the Marriage Law (2001) and the Women's Law (2005) and equal retirement age in the development of the Civil Servant Law (2005), and explores the conditioning factors affecting the effectiveness of these policy actions launched by women's organizations. Comparing a few successful and unsuccessful advocacy cases in areas of

environment, poverty alleviation, health, and women's rights, Qiaoan (2022) argues that NGOs can only succeed in pressing for policy changes by achieving cultural resonance with policymakers through two channels: cultural congruence, or frame alignment, and relevance of usefulness, or puzzle-solving potential.

In addition to uncovering organizational practice in the policy process, some scholars further analyze social organizations' strategies in influencing policies. The most popular strategy disclosed in the literature is establishing partnerships with the Party-state or specific officials. To support the consultative authoritarianism model, Teets (2014, 145-156) finds that information dissemination by action research and the use of interpersonal connections are more effective strategies to change the relationships with officials and achieve long-term policy change than non-collaborative strategies, such as collective protest, shaming politics, and complete independence. In another article, Teets (2018) examines how a few environmental organizations create policy networks that embed supervisory officials and relevant policymakers to change environmental policies. Although she still admits the positive effects of interpersonal connections, she further discloses that when the supervisor is embedded through mutual policy interests rather than personal ties, the network is more likely to change policy successfully. She argues that these networks are similar to the "epistemic community" concept in constructing a shared understanding of policy problems and solutions. Drawing upon the evidence from the revision of the National Ambient Air Quality Standard in 2011, which lists PM 2.5⁴ as a mandatory parameter, Wu (2023) argues that collaborative environmental NGOs' networks that tried to avoid direct confrontations with the authorities contributed to the successful policy change. Farid (2019) discloses the

⁴ PM 2.5 means fine particulate matter or fine particles less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter. They pose the greatest risk to health because they can travel deeply into lungs or even the bloodstream. Before 2011, China had no official definition or standardized measurement of PM 2.5.

cooperation between local grassroots NGOs operating in environmental or education fields and local government agencies in providing services and implementing various programs. In the process, those NGOs contribute to governance innovations and gain opportunities to influence relevant policies. With updated data, Farid and Li (2021) further discover that reciprocal engagement between indigenous grassroots NGOs—many of them operate in rural areas—and local governments facilitates policy implementation and revision. This positive-sum relationship, characterized by proximity and communication, mutual support, and joint action, helps NGOs exert influence in the policy process. Similar phenomena are also identified in urban areas. Huang et al. (2019) find that grassroots organizations in a Shanghai-based community elderly care service network engage in administrative advocacy through service delivery collaborations with local governments. Cai et al. (2022) also find that social work organizations in Shenzhen and Nanjing use nonconfrontational tactics to influence local policies when conducting service contracting projects. Similarly, Qu et al. (2023, 135-136) uncover that a primary grassroots organization in a city in east China gains opportunities to influence local policies by implementing service contracting programs. Applying the advocacy coalition framework and the epistemic communities' framework, Francesch-Huidobro and Mai (2012) document the roles played by three Guangzhou-based environmental government-organized non-governmental organizations (GONGOs) in promoting the city's and the province's low-carbon development policies. These organizations acquired recognition and endorsement from relevant government departments and made their demands in a nonconfrontational manner within the existing decision-making framework in pursuit of incremental policy changes (Francesch-Huidobro and Mai 2012, 55S-56S).

Admittedly, social organizations do not rely on a single strategy. Some researchers disclose that social organizations adopt other strategies in practice to influence policies. Sometimes,

organizations apply combinations of multiple strategies, most of which are also collaborative. Citing Yirenping, an NGO in the health field, as a typical case, Fu (2013, 2019) documents that some NGOs partnered with lawyers to file public interest litigations and push for relevant policy changes. Teets and Almen (2018) argue that nonprofit organizations (NPOs) in China strategically adapt to the changing political opportunity structure in the Xi Jinping era by diversifying their policy advocacy strategies from relying more on personal connections to using the law, media framing, and establishing expert status. Dai and Spires (2017) examine local environmental NGOs' policy activities in Guangzhou and Shenzhen. They find that these organizations employ a variety of advocacy strategies to influence local-level government policies, such as cultivating government relationships, selecting the "frames," and obtaining media exposure. Gleiss et al. (2019) identify three different channels/strategies used by civil society actors to engage in advocacy—participating in the open public consultation process when a new law or regulation is being drafted, establishing personal connections to government officials and scholars involved in the policymaking process, and getting one's opinions voiced in the media. Fürst (2016) examines environmental organizations' efforts to control or prevent industrial pollution in China, which involve many specific policy-related activities. Those organizations apply various levers/strategies to achieve their objectives, including conducting research, training officials, media exposure, and filing public interest litigations. One particular strategy used by the All China Environment Federation, a prominent national environmental GONGO, is to transmit the pollution information upwards within the official system via the 'internal reference news' system, which is largely hidden from the public (Fürst 2016, 160-163, 172).

A few studies investigate broader organizational and institutional factors shaping organizations' policy engagement, the effectiveness of policy participation, or the selection of

strategies to influence policies. Some factors coincide with strategies that an organization can intentionally choose, while others are more difficult to control for an organization. Drawing on political opportunity and resource dependence theories, Zhan and Tang (2013) find that political structural changes have created greater opportunities for civic environmental organizations' policy advocacy. Organizations with the following features are more capable of utilizing these opportunities to engage in policy advocacy actions: better financial and human resources, more extensive connections to the party-state system, better networking relations with other environmental organizations, legal registration, and the location of Beijing. As mentioned above, Du (2012) explores the conditioning factors affecting the effectiveness of two policy campaigns launched by women's organizations. She identifies five factors that contributed to the success of one case and the failure of the other—legitimacy, leadership, organizational forms, learning and framing policy issues, and sources of funds. Liu (2020) provides a typology to describe policy advocacy channels according to their formality and consistency. Drawing on resource dependence theory, he explains how environmental NGOs select policy advocacy channels based on their political resource endowments rather than financial resource endowments. Xie and Augustin-Jean (2022) underline that personal connections (*guanxi*) of environmental organizations' leaders with various actors, especially political authorities, play a pivotal role in facilitating environmentalism, enabling access to the political system, and promoting the organizing of environmental campaigns.

There exist a limited number of quantitative studies on factors shaping organizations' policy influence based on data from original surveys or other sources. Quantitative methods have the advantages of dealing with large-N datasets and exploring a bunch of factors at the same time. Drawing on the abundant quantitative research on the topic in the settings of democracies, these studies in the context of China test similar theories and variables. The leading theories applied or

tested in the research are resource mobilization theory, resource dependence theory, and institutional theory. Popular explanatory variables explored in these studies include organizational age, size, type, origin, location, legal registration, government funding, representation of constituents, and relationships with the government or other social organizations. Most studies encompass variables describing organizations' relationships with the government. It is a unique characteristic in the context of China because of the state's dominance in the policy process. Chapter Nine will introduce these studies in more detail and compare them with this research.

The scholarship on the policy influence of Chinese social organizations has established the independent status of the research topic and provided important insights into organizational strategies and other factors shaping their actions and effectiveness in influencing policies. However, as an emerging realm on the new issue-oriented research agenda, this field of study leaves many issues underexamined or unexplored and invites further investigation.

First of all, most studies in the existing literature focus on one or two types of social organizations. Environmental organizations are the most popular field of interest because of their significant and consistent policy actions. Similar research in the fields of women and health is also visible, albeit to a lesser degree. In contrast, policy-oriented studies in other fields are rare. For example, as discussed in Chapter Four, research in the labor field has concentrated on labor movements instead of influencing labor policies, resulting in some biased conclusions and a pessimistic perspective. There have been no comparative studies on the policy influence of Chinese social organizations across various organizational fields, which limits the generalization of research findings.

Second, focusing on the policy influence of grassroots social organizations, the existing literature has underexamined that of GONGOs. In the studies reviewed above, only Du (2012)

investigates the policy activities of a prominent women's GONGO, and Francesch-Huidobro and Mai (2012) and Fürst (2016) include the policy functions of a few environmental GONGOs. This imbalance may result from the view that GONGOs are not a genuine part of civil society. Nevertheless, these official organizations could play an essential role in the policy process and may serve as the intermediate between grassroots social organizations and the government. Therefore, leaving them out will lead to incomplete research conclusions. Furthermore, a prevalent viewpoint is that GONGOs should have more policy influence than grassroots organizations because they are equipped with more resources and expertise and enjoy preferential access to the government (Li et al., 2016; Hasmath et al., 2019). However, this monolithic perspective neglects ramifications within the sector of GONGOs. In fact, GONGOs' policy influence differs according to working areas, origins, supervisory bodies, and statuses in the official system. There have been no adequate in-depth studies on the policy influence of many individual GONGOs, not to mention comparative studies across various types of GONGOs.

Third, the existing research primarily concentrates on social organizations engaging in influencing policies. It was reasonable when scholarly attention started to move into this area. However, with a deepening understanding of the topic, why some organizations are generally absent in the policy arena becomes salient. In other words, to obtain a more panoramic picture of the landscape of organizations' policy influence, those staying away from policy issues also deserve further study. In addition, discovering the obstacles to their policy engagement will not only provide theoretical insights into public policy participation in China but also inspire practitioners to promote such participation.

Fourth, as introduced before, the primary organizational strategy to influence policies disclosed in the literature is establishing partnerships with the Party-state or specific officials. Even

if some studies uncover the application of multiple strategies, they are more often than not collaborative strategies. Teets' (2014, 145-156) judgment that collaborative strategies are more effective in achieving long-term policy change than non-collaborative strategies represents the prevailing view in the literature (Farid 2019, 538-539). However, most existing studies downplay the existence and effectiveness of non-collaborative strategies adopted by some organizations. For example, those organizations participating in the campaign against the Nu River Dam project openly criticized state actors, such as local governments, relevant central government agencies, and large state-owned enterprises, and embraced multiple non-collaborative strategies in the process. Many studies on this case fail to generalize this line of strategy but overemphasize their collaboration with individual officials in the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) and framing the issue according to state policies. For another example, Teets (2014, 158-170; 2018, 130-136) notes that both the Global Environmental Institute (GEI) and Friends of Nature (FON), two prominent environmental NGOs in China, used interpersonal connections to obtain legal status and access policymakers. She even argues that the FON is less successful because it relies only on a "guanxi policy network (Teets 2018, 133)." This misjudgment ignores the fact that the FON adopted quite a few non-collaborative strategies in its policy actions and made as remarkable achievements as the GEI. The scholarship on Chinese social organizations needs to avoid the tendency to select one-sided evidence to support a particular theoretical framework.

Fifth, drawing on research methods developed in democracies, those studies exploring organizational and institutional factors shaping organizations' policy influence in China expand scholarly horizons. However, provided this line of research is still in its early stages, more factors need to be investigated. For example, the formalization and professionalization of organizations, a frequently studied factor in democratic settings, is underexamined in the context of China. Given

its theoretical and practical significance⁵, this factor needs to be included in case studies and quantitative analysis. For another example, the existing research completely leaves out the effects of international connections. Although this factor is unimportant in democratic settings, it must play an essential role in China because many international organizations have extensive activities in this country to facilitate nascent indigenous organizations. Therefore, the analysis should also embrace this factor.

Finally, after establishing the new issue-oriented research agenda, scholars have applied various theoretical frameworks to analyze social organizations' policy influence. As reviewed above, these theoretical frameworks include political opportunity structures, advocacy coalition framework, epistemic communities' framework, resource dependence theory, resource mobilization theory, and institutional theory. Some scholars create their own analytical frameworks. For example, Mertha (2009, 2010) creates the concept of fragmented authoritarianism 2.0; Teets (2014) invents the model of consultative authoritarianism; Du (2012) integrates the five factors mentioned before into a pentagon-shaped framework as a road map to guide her research. Although these theoretical frameworks add essential insights to the exploration of social organizations' policy influence, they stray entirely away from the civil society/state corporatism approaches on which the scholarship centered for an extended period. Since almost all studies admit that state-society relations are critical for organizations' policy influence and the civil society/state corporatism approaches dominated the research on China's state-society relations, it is reasonable to apply these approaches in analyzing organizations' policy influence in China. Even if they are not the only valuable frameworks, they are worth a try. Breaking with academic tradition is a waste of scholarly heritage.

⁵ Chapter Nine will discuss the significance of this factor in detail.

As the research design section in this chapter will show, this research attempts to inherit the academic traditions of both state-society relations and organizational policy influence and fill in the gaps in the existing literature by tackling critical underexamined or unexplored issues. The following section will introduce state regulations on social organizations in China to provide background information.

1.2 State Regulations on Social Organizations in China

The Chinese government officially classifies social organizations into three categories—social group (*shehui tuanti*), private non-enterprise entity (*minban feiqiye danwei*), and foundation (*jijinhui*). Private non-enterprise entities are non-profit social service organizations. Foundations are non-profit legal entities that employ assets donated by persons, legal entities, or other organizations to engage in public benefit activities. Social groups are non-profit organizations formed voluntarily by Chinese citizens to realize the shared objectives of their members and carry out activities according to their constitutions.⁶ The main difference between a social group and the other two categories is that the former is a membership organization, whereas the latter is not (Lu 2009, 3). The Charity Law adopted by the National People’s Congress (NPC) in 2016 has renamed “private non-enterprise entity” as “social service organization (*shehui fuwu jigou*).” However, official documents used both names as of 2023.

The Chinese government enacted separate regulations to manage these three categories of social organizations. In 1988, the State Council issued Measures for the Management of Foundations, China's first regulation on social organizations. It was replaced by the Regulation on Foundation Administration in 2004. In 1989, the State Council promulgated the Management Regulation on the Registration of Social Groups. This regulation was replaced by the Regulation

⁶ The definitions of these three categories of social organizations are according to official definitions in their respective state regulations.

on the Registration and Administration of Social Groups in 1998. The State Council revised the regulation in 2016. In 1998, the State Council issued the Provisional Regulation on the Registration and Administration of Private Non-enterprise Entities. These regulations formed the current policy framework governing social organizations. Despite these changes, the Party-state's principle of governing social organizations has always been a two-pronged approach, i.e., utilizing these organizations on the one hand and controlling them to minimize potential risks on the other hand (Lam 2020, 12-13). All these regulations include some critical measures controlling their registration and management.

First, as these regulations stipulate, most social organizations must register with the Ministry of Civil Affairs (MOCA) or its local branches to acquire legal status. Foundations must register at the provincial or central government level. Two kinds of organizations are exempt from this requirement. One kind is "secondary organizations" formed within government agencies, social organizations, enterprises, or public institutions (*shiye danwei*) to carry out activities internally. In practice, however, many of these organizations do not confine their activities to the premises of their mother organizations (Lu 2009, 3). The other kind is the so-called mass organization (*quntuan zuzhi*). There are 22 mass organizations managed directly by the State Commission for Public Sector Reform, an agency under the leadership of both the Central Committee of the CCP and the State Council. Seven of these 22 mass organizations are guaranteed to attend the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). Another mass organization guaranteed to attend the CPPCC is the All-China Youth Federation, which is missing from the list of the 22 mass organizations mentioned above. Therefore, there are 23 mass organizations in total. Among them, the All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU), the China Communist Youth League (CCYL), and the All China Women's Federation (ACWF) are the most prominent.

Second, these regulations require every organization to find a sponsoring unit (*yewu zhuguan danwei*). Only after obtaining the sponsoring unit's approval can an organization send the registration request to the MOCA or one of its local departments. Sponsoring units must be government organs above the county level or organizations authorized by these government organs. In addition, a sponsoring unit must be responsible for the same field in which the organization operates. The sponsoring unit supervises the organization's major activities and ensures it complies with all legal and ideological requirements. This dual registration and management system creates a risk and authority-sharing mechanism between the MOCA agencies and sponsoring units. A sponsoring unit has a regulatory incentive to control organizational activities to avoid political risk (Teets 2014, 158). In practice, many grassroots organizations have developed strategies to circumvent this obstacle. Some register with the Industry and Commerce Bureaus⁷ as commercial enterprises, which is a less arduous process than registering with the MOCA. Some register as a "secondary organization" within other institutions. Others do not register at all.

Third, except for foundations, only one social group or private non-enterprise entity is allowed to represent or serve relevant functional groups within an administrative area. For example, the registration request of an association of disabled persons will be denied if a similar organization is already registered in the administrative area.

Fourth, only foundations can establish branches or representative offices (*daibiao jigou*), while private non-enterprise entities cannot establish any branches or representative offices. Social groups are prohibited from establishing geographical region-based branches or representative offices; any branch cannot establish more branches.

Finally, in addition to meeting funding requirements, social organizations must have fixed

⁷ The newly founded State Administration for Market Regulation incorporated this agency in 2018.

locations, regular staff, and relevant organizational institutions to register. All social organizations registered with the MOCA agencies are subject to annual inspections by these agencies and sponsoring units.

Chinese regulations on social organizations have consistently dangled between cautious opening and the reassertion of state control (Lang 2018, 170). To benefit more from social organizations, local governments have undertaken reforms regarding both registration and fundraising. In 2009, Shenzhen experimented with a system for social organizations to register directly with the Civil Affairs Department instead of finding another sponsoring unit first (Hsu and Hasmath 2014, 524; Teets 2014, 174). Beijing followed suit soon. In addition, the Beijing municipal government initiated a grants program in 2010 to fund groups proposing social innovation projects and providing public services (Lam 2020, 15). Public foundations were also allowed to establish special funds for specific partner organizations. In the following few years, similar innovations spread to many municipalities and provinces, including Shanghai, Chengdu, Nanjing, other municipalities in Guangdong Province, and Yunnan Province (Teets 2014, 74-78, 174-175). By 2013, 26 provinces and five municipalities adopted direct registration for certain types of social organizations, with more than 19,000 groups registered directly with civil affairs departments (Teets 2018, 137). In addition to easing registration restrictions, local governments increasingly contract out the provision of social services to nonprofit organizations (Teets 2014, 75; Teets and Jagusztyn, 2016; Zhu et al. 2021, 780-781; Martinez et al. 2022, 688-689; Kan and Ku 2023, 873-876; Song 2024, 38-44).

Xi Jinping succeeded Hu Jintao as the General Secretary of the CCP in November 2012 and as the Chinese President in March 2013. Xi secured a third term for both positions ten years later, creating a precedent after Mao Zedong. He is arguably the most powerful leader since Mao,

and his administration is known for the dramatic centralization of authority and returning to conservative ideology and policies (Economy 2019, 10-12; Huang 2020, 124-127). However, regarding state regulations on social organizations, his administration has inherited the previous principle of utilizing and controlling them and escalated to a new level in both directions (Sidel and Hu, 2021; Tian and Chuang 2022, 511-514; Han and Lu 2022, 527). As Sun (2023, 201) argues, after Xi Jinping took office, the state still tolerates a growing number of non-regime-challenging civil society activities but simultaneously strangles the emerging civil society that attempts to check and monitor the state. Zhang (2018, 739) delineates this strategy as “selective control and selective empowerment at the same time.” It is also consistent with Han’s (2018, 404) conclusion that the Xi administration has adopted a bifurcated or divide-and-rule approach to manage and regulate social organizations.

In November 2013, the Third Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee promulgated the Decision on Several Major Issues in Comprehensively Deepening Reform. This document lists four types of social organizations that can register directly with the MOCA agencies without sponsoring units—social organizations working on commerce (industrial associations and chambers of commerce), science and technology, charity and philanthropy, and urban and rural community services (Ye 2021, 186). It is the first time that direct registration appears in a national policy, which confirms and limits local innovations at the same time. In 2014, the MOCA and the Ministry of Finance (MOF) jointly issued two policy documents to support and normalize the service purchasing from social organizations by the government (Sun 2023, 92-93).

In August 2016, the General Office of the CCP Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council issued *Opinions on Reforming the Management System of Social Organizations to Promote Healthy and Orderly Development*. In addition to reiterating direct

registration for the four types of social organizations (Ye 2021, 186), this policy document encourages governments' procurement of social organizations' services and the exploration of permitting multiple organizations with similar working domains in certain regions. In addition, the document strictly regulates civil servants' concurrent holding of social organizations' leadership positions. However, this document also authorizes CCP organizations within social organizations to participate in important decisions, which continues to deepen the Party's penetration of organizations' operations after another document required social organizations to establish CCP branches in 2015⁸ (Lam 2020, 15-16; Nie and Wu 2022, 48; Xin and Huang 2022, 434; Han and Lu 2022, 527). These policy documents cover not only top-down organizations or Party-organized non-governmental organizations, as Thornton (2016) delineates, but also bottom-up grassroots organizations (Thornton, 2022). The state rewards organizations conforming to new regulations. For example, Wang and Wang (2023) find that the establishment of party branches in social organizations significantly increased their levels of government funding. For another example, Li (2023) uncovers that NGOs' party-building activities enhance their political capital.

The Charity Law adopted and implemented in 2016 authorizes social organizations working in five domains, including poverty alleviation, human services, disaster relief, environmental protection, and promoting causes of science, education, culture, and health, to obtain preferential status as "charitable organizations" from the MOCA agencies. These organizations can directly register with the MOCA agencies without the approval of sponsoring units. Charitable organizations can apply to qualify for public fundraising provided additional conditions are satisfied, and organizations or individuals without the qualification of public fundraising may cooperate with qualified charities to solicit the public for donations (Li R. 2021,

⁸ The General Office of the CCP Central Committee issued the document titled the Interim Opinions on Strengthening the Party-Building in Social Organizations in 2015.

129; Ye 2021, 187). The Charity Law stipulates that charitable organizations, donors, and beneficiaries enjoy various tax benefits. Other benefits for charitable organizations include preferential use of public land, financial policy support, and participation in government programs purchasing social services. This law generally provides a more enabling environment for charitable organizations operating in China, although many organizations have been dissatisfied with its implementation (Sidel and Hu 2021, 201-202; Jakimów 2021, 68-69; Sun 2023, 93-94).

In 2018, the MOCA published the draft of the Regulation on the Registration and Administration of Social Organizations on its website for public consultation, reflecting the state's purpose of integrating the aforementioned three regulations into a unified one. Although the regulation has been listed in the State Council's legislative plan almost every year, it was still in the legislative process as of 2023.⁹ This draft relaxes restrictions on certain aspects of social organizations' registration and management (Jakimów 2021, 68). It allows direct registration for the four types of social organizations mentioned above, while all other social organizations must find sponsoring units before registration. The draft only limits the registration of social groups that apply to the MOCA and have the same or similar working domains as existing social groups. Other limitations regarding establishing similar social organizations in an administrative area are lifted. Social organizations can establish non-geographical region-based branches and representative offices within the jurisdiction of their registration agencies. According to the draft, annual inspection is abolished. Instead, social organizations only need to submit annual work reports to registration agencies and sponsoring units, if applicable.

Although the Xi administration facilitates the development of selected types of social organizations and relaxes restrictions on certain aspects, it exerts stricter controls over social

⁹ See a news report of the China Philanthropy Times at <http://www.gongyishibao.com/html/yaowen/2020/07/15024.html>, accessed on October 10, 2023.

organizations at the same time. Using state–labor relations as a bellwether, Howell and Pringle (2019) identify four different shades of authoritarianism: exploitative, protective, open, and encapsulating. They argue that the Hu-Wen era corresponded to an open authoritarian shade, while the Xi era reflects an encapsulating shade. In an open shade of authoritarianism, opportunities for organizational development, activism, and influence emerge. An encapsulating shade of authoritarianism does not exclude reform. Rather, it envisages innovation and experimentation falling entirely under Party control, with the potential for civic interventions becoming more constrained (Howell and Pringle 2019, 241). Establishing and expanding CCP organizations within social organizations is a typical example of Party control in the Xi era.

The Xi administration has carried out overt criminalization and repression of more aggressive activists and organizations (Han and Lu, 2022). The last decade witnessed waves of repression across various sectors of civil society, such as human rights lawyers, investigative journalists, religious practitioners, and feminists (Howell and Pringle 2019, 238; Lam 2020; Wang 2021, 185). In 2013, it cracked down on the New Citizen Movement and the Southern Street Movement, which advocated for a liberal political regime and citizenship rights, and arrested many activists, including Xu Zhiyong and Guo Feixiong, two leaders of the movements (Lam 2020, 112-113; Jakimów 2021, 242). On July 9, 2015, the government launched what is later called “the 709 Crackdown,” an action to crack down on human rights lawyers and other activists. In a few months, more than three hundred people were targeted, including numerous cases of detention, forced disappearance, and torture (Pils, 2017; Pils 2019, 69; Lam 2020, 113-117). In the same year, the police detained five feminist activists, and the government cracked down on more feminist organizations and activists and strangled China’s emerging #MeToo movement in the next few years. Chapter Two of this research provides more details about these events. In addition, many

other NGOs working with socially contentious issues such as some health issues, LGBT issues, religious issues, and migrant labor rights were repressed (Economy 2019, 11; Howell and Pringle 2019, 238; Teets and Almen 2018, 3; Tian 2020, 6-7; Han and Lu 2022, 527-528; Dirks and Fu 2023, 25, 42-43; Ren and Gui 2024, 102, 108-109). A few chapters of this research will present relevant cases.

The NPC passed the Law on the Administration of Activities of Overseas Non-Governmental Organizations within Mainland China (ONGO Law hereafter) in 2016 and revised it in 2017. This law significantly restricts the registration and activities of overseas NGOs in mainland China and limits domestic social organizations' international funding sources (Economy 2019, 178; Jakimów 2021, 69, 102; Wang 2021, 185; Wu 2021, 331; Huang 2022, 1064). Instead of the MOCA agencies, the Ministry of Public Security (MOPS) and province-level public security bureaus take charge of the registration and management of overseas NGOs conducting activities within China, underscoring the national security concerns of the Party-state (Lam 2020, 17; Sun 2023, 96-97). To conduct activities in China, overseas NGOs shall register representative offices or file a record and cooperate with Chinese partner organizations if only conducting temporary activities (Sidel and Hu 2021, 207). To register representative offices, overseas NGOs must first find sponsoring units. Only relevant departments or other units of the State Council and province-level governments can serve as their sponsoring units (Sun 2023, 96-97). Sponsoring units supervise organizations' activities and ensure they comply with all legal requirements (Wu and Nie 2021, 178; Li and Farid 2023, 515). Representative offices must report their annual activity plans and personnel arrangements to sponsoring units and registration agencies, and these offices are subject to annual inspections by them. In addition to registration agencies and sponsoring units, relevant government departments at the county level or above shall supervise overseas NGOs and

their representative offices within their respective jurisdictions. For example, the anti-money laundering departments shall supervise bank accounts of representative offices, their Chinese partners, and organizations or individuals within China receiving funding from overseas NGOs. Unless the State Council approves, overseas NGOs cannot establish branches and recruit members in China. Neither can they conduct fundraising activities within China (Hasmath and Hsu 2021, 228; Sun 2023, 97). Furthermore, overseas NGOs must not engage in/fund political activities or illegally conduct/fund religious activities (Wu and Nie 2021, 179).

As Li and Farid (2023) discover, overseas NGOs have adopted four strategies in response to the ONGO Law—legal registration, provisional strategy, localization¹⁰, and exit. By the end of 2021, 631 representative offices of overseas NGOs had been registered, and 4,018 temporary activities had been recorded.¹¹ However, the registration process is relatively easier for major overseas NGOs than smaller ones, thanks to their solid political connections and sufficient resources to overcome the new bureaucratic hurdles (Lang 2018, 165; Wu and Nie 2021, 189). The ONGO Law does not completely close off the space for civil society in China (Hsu and Teets 2016, 13; Holbig and Lang, 2022). Overseas NGOs can still operate within a confined framework around service provision, albeit heavily constrained by the law (Howell and Pringle 2019, 239; Sidel and Hu 2021, 207-208). The government still encourages some foreign NGOs to provide expertise and money in such fields as rural education, poverty alleviation, and water conservation, while activities in rights protection, advocacy, religion, and other areas are generally prohibited (Sun 2023, 97). There are reports that public security bureaus pressured overseas NGOs to stop working with Chinese NGOs that were perceived to work on rights issues and rejected their filings for

¹⁰ Some overseas NGOs registered independent local NGOs in China. See Li and Farid (2023, 519-520).

¹¹ See p. 19 in China Philanthropy Law Report 2023 published by the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law. It is available at <https://www.icnl.org/post/report/china-philanthropy-law>, accessed November 20, 2023.

temporary activities in these situations.¹²

The MOCA issued the first particular Five-year Plan for Social Organization Development in September 2021. On the one hand, the plan encourages social organizations to serve the state, society, the people, and the sector. On the other hand, it aims to strengthen the political, administrative, disciplinary, and other types of oversight of social organizations. Regarding the regulatory mechanisms, the plan attempts to create a framework to buttress the three pillars of the Party-state's nonprofit policy: party leadership, NGOs' service function, and government control (Wang 2022, 355). It shows that the Party-state's principle of utilizing and controlling social organizations simultaneously has been consistent.

1.3 Research Design

This section specifies the design of this research and discusses the relationship between this research and the existing literature. In addition, it presents the analytical framework developed and tested in this research. It is necessary to elucidate a few critical concepts applied in this research in the first place.

1.3.1 A Few Critical Concepts

1.3.1.1 Social Organizations

This research uses the term "social organizations" because it encompasses a variety of organizations in China, including top-down organizations (GONGOs), bottom-up organizations (grassroots organizations), social groups, private non-enterprise entities, foundations, organizations registered with MOCA agencies, commercially registered organizations, secondary organizations, and non-registered organizations. Popular concepts, such as NGOs or civil society organizations, cannot denote these wide-ranging organizations in China. A widely recognized

¹² Ibid, p. 21.

definition identifies the following common features of these organizations (Salamon et al. 1999, 3-4):

- Organizations, i.e., they have an institutional presence and structure.
- Private, i.e., they are institutionally separate from the state.
- Not profit distributing, i.e., they do not return profits to their managers or to a set of “owners.”
- Self-governing, i.e., they are fundamentally in control of their own affairs.
- Voluntary, i.e., membership in them is not legally required, and they attract some level of voluntary contribution of time or money.

According to this definition, top-down organizations or GONGOs are questionable in possessing private, self-governing, and voluntary features. In addition, some non-registered informal organizations in this research lack institutional presence and structure. “Not profit distributing” seems to be a common characteristic of the organizations in this research, making the terms NPOs or nonprofits more appropriate. However, some commercially registered organizations have no official form of nonprofit organization, even though they do not distribute profits in practice. Therefore, “social organizations” is the most appropriate term to denote the organizations included in this research. In rare cases, the terms NPOs or nonprofits are also used. Nevertheless, other terms may still appear in citations.

1.3.1.2 Policy Influence

A popular term in studies of organizations’ policy activities is advocacy. One widely used definition of advocacy is any attempt to influence the decisions of any institutional elite on behalf of a collective interest (Jenkins 1987, 297). Because institutional elites are not necessarily policymakers, this broad definition is unsuitable for studies focusing on public policies. The other

widely accepted narrower definition of advocacy is attempts to influence government decisions through both direct and indirect means (Reid 1999, 291). This definition targets public policies more precisely. To avoid confusion, some authors use the term “policy advocacy” (Mosley, 2011; Almog-Bar and Schmid, 2014; Zhang, 2015, 2018; Zhan and Tang, 2013, 2016; Li, 2016; Li et al., 2016; Lu, 2018; Liu, 2020). However, its meaning is no different from the narrower definition just mentioned. This research employs a straightforward way to put forward the research issue as “policy influence” or “influencing policies,” which circumvents the confusion and complexity regarding the term advocacy. Nevertheless, advocacy or policy advocacy may still appear in citations.

Policy influence has three levels of meaning in this research. The first level is the organization’s willingness to influence public policies. The measurement for willingness is whether the organization intends to influence policies and how firm the intention is. The second level is the action taken by the organization to influence policies, as “actions speak louder than words.” In this research, the measurement for action is whether the organization acted and the frequency of actions influencing policies. The third level is the effectiveness of influencing policies. When policy outcomes fully or partially corresponded to the goals of organizational actions, the organization arguably influenced policies effectively. The measurement for this dimension is whether the organization influenced policies effectively and how frequently the organization influenced policies effectively.

This research applies a goal-attainment approach to define the effectiveness of influencing policies. As Zhang and Guo (2020, 951) comment, it is often a challenge to establish a causal link between the efforts of specific actors and a policy change. To overcome the difficulty, this research provides more details and establishes causal links between organizations’ policy actions and policy

outcomes in in-depth case studies. In addition, as introduced later in this chapter, the author asked the respondents to establish the causal links themselves during the interviews and surveys.

As reviewed before, the existing research has studied social organizations' policy actions and the effectiveness of some actions. In addition, the scholarship primarily concentrates on social organizations engaging in influencing policies while neglecting those that remain silent in the policy arena. This research will fill the gap by investigating these organizations, including both top-down and bottom-up organizations. Are they unwilling to influence policies, or at least some of them have the intention but fail to do so for some reason? To answer these questions, it is necessary to add a dimension of willingness to the ordinary concept of policy influence that usually only includes action and effectiveness. As shown later, the analytical framework developed in this research serves as a well-fitted theoretical construction to reflect China's reality by integrating this multi-level or multi-dimensional definition of policy influence. The empirical analysis in Chapter Nine also demonstrates that one dimension of this concept cannot replace the other two dimensions, and this multi-dimensional definition leads to a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of organizations' policy influence. For example, some organizations stopped proceeding even if they were willing to influence policies, while others took frequent actions to influence policies but achieved little. If only effectiveness in influencing policies is considered, these organizations' impacts will be left out.

1.3.1.3 Organizational Field

As introduced before, the existing literature has studied different types of social organizations, such as environmental organizations, women's organizations, health organizations, and labor organizations. Differentiating social organizations according to organizational field of activity has become an academic tradition in studies of Chinese social organizations. These fields form broad policy areas in which specific types of actors, such as certain social organizations and

government agencies, operate. These fields consist of those organizations that, in the aggregate, constitute a recognized area of institutional life (DiMaggio and Powell 1983, 148). As Verschuere and De Corte (2015, 226) argue, in these fields, stable patterns of interaction among the totality of relevant actors are produced and exert field-specific institutional forces on their occupants. Therefore, investigating different fields of social organizations has a substantial theoretical basis. This research follows the academic tradition by studying seven organizational fields, which will be explained later in this chapter.

1.3.1.4 Insider/Outsider versus Collaborative/Non-collaborative Strategies

A widely used classification of organizational strategies to influence policies in democracies is to group them into insider (direct) and outsider (indirect) strategies. Insider (direct) strategies are intended to change policy by working directly with policymakers and other institutional elites, emphasizing working “inside the system.” Outsider (indirect) strategies refer to extra-institutional tactics emphasizing working “outside the system” (Almog-Bar and Schmid 2014, 21). Outsider strategies focus primarily on changing the climate around policymaking by shaping public opinion (Mosley 2011, 436-437; Lu 2018, 179S; Zhao and Lu 2018, 415). Insider strategies encompass participating in government committees and commissions, providing public testimony, and lobbying policymakers for changes. Outsider strategies include non-conflictual activities such as public education, gaining mass media coverage, releasing policy reports, and more aggressive activities such as working with advocacy coalitions, voter mobilization, taking issues into court, protests, boycotts, and demonstrations (Almog-Bar and Schmid 2014, 21; Mosley 2011, 436-437, 440; Verschuere and De Corte, 2015; Lu 2018, 179S; Zhao and Lu 2018, 415). However, insider and outsider strategies are not mutually exclusive. Many organizations do not limit themselves to one sole strategy to perform their advocacy role (Mosley 2011, 439; Verschuere and De Corte 2015, 231; Zhang and Guo 2020, 947; Mosley et al. 2023, 196S).

It concurs with researchers' observations in China. Those strategies disclosed by studies on Chinese social organizations' policy influence include both insider and outsider strategies. This research also finds that almost all social organizations engaging in influencing policies employ both strategies. As an environmental NGO leader puts it, it is not just about using a specific tactic forever; it is about choosing the right tactic at the right time (Li et al. 2016, 111). Therefore, the distinction between insider and outsider strategies may not determine long-range modes of policy influence, provided its contingent nature. Only a minority of scholars apply these concepts in their studies on the policy influence of Chinese social organizations. For example, Li et al. (2016) investigate the use of insider and outsider strategies among Chinese environmental organizations. They conclude that even though the distinction between insider and outsider tactics is an important issue in Western literature, in the context of China, at least in its current stage of development, the distinction seems to be less important in some respects than others (Li et al. 2016, 114).

Another less-used classification of organizational strategies to influence policies in democracies is to group them into collaborative and non-collaborative strategies according to organizational attitudes toward the state (Onyx et al., 2010; Arvidson et al., 2018; Clear et al., 2018). Clear et al. (2018) name them "cooperative tactical position" and "confrontational tactical position." Social organizations taking the former position seek to influence policymakers in a supportive and obliging manner, while those taking the latter position seek to challenge policymakers (Clear et al. 2018, 860-861). Furthermore, they find that these two positions include overlapping advocacy activities with insider and outsider strategies, meaning that these classifications are not mutually exclusive.

However, a majority of scholars apply the concepts of collaborative and non-collaborative strategies in their studies on the policy influence of Chinese social organizations. Compared with

insider and outsider strategies, collaborative and non-collaborative strategies are less contingent on specific cases and more associated with long-range modes of policy influence. More importantly, given the Chinese state's dominance in the policy process and the authoritarian regime, organizations' attitudes toward the state are crucial to their policy influence, operation, and survival. The unique contextual characteristics of China determine scholars' preferred usage of the concepts of collaborative and non-collaborative strategies. However, as reviewed above, most existing studies stress the importance of collaborative strategies while downplaying the existence and effectiveness of non-collaborative strategies adopted by some organizations. Unlike these studies, this research finds that Chinese social organizations embrace both types of strategies and accordingly theorizes them into distinct policy influence modes. Furthermore, this research discovers that institutional factors largely determine strategy shifts.

1.3.2 Sampling

This research mainly focuses on national-level organizations in Beijing because they are supposed to be more active and influential in the policy process. To be classified as a national-level organization, an organization must either register with the Ministry of Civil Affairs or conduct some major activities beyond the geographical area of Beijing or the location in which it is situated. Extant studies have found that many of Beijing's social organizations actively influence policies. Those organizations located in the country's capital are more advantaged in raising public attention, using social media, or lobbying the government. Furthermore, they have better opportunities to influence the central government and local affairs in other regions (Zhan and Tang 2013, 393; Li et al. 2016, 109; Qiaoan 2022, 10). However, this research also includes some organizations outside of Beijing because they are leading organizations in their fields or cooperated with Beijing's organizations to influence policies. In addition, the author visited a few community organizations to consult with organizational leaders, albeit they are not the main research objects.

This research studies environmental organizations and six fields of human service organizations, including women's organizations, health organizations, and organizations serving migrant workers, disabled persons, minors, and seniors. China's economic development has been at the cost of social inequality and environmental degradation. On the one hand, these underprivileged groups urgently need their voices to be heard in the public sphere. On the other hand, as sociopolitical contradictions and tensions arise, the Party-state needs mechanisms of interest representation to sustain its rule. The mutual needs have led to the development of social organizations in these fields. Representing different underprivileged groups, these organizations are supposed to act actively to protect their rights and influence relevant public policies. Researchers have found significant organizational policy actions in the fields of environment, women, and health. Sporadic studies also document such actions in the other four fields. However, as introduced before, most studies focus on one or two types of social organizations, and there have been no comparative studies across various organizational fields. In addition, in-depth studies on the policy influence of many individual GONGOs and comparative studies across various types of GONGOs are inadequate, provided their possible essential role in the policy process. Encompassing and comparing multiple fields of social organizations, including both top-down and bottom-up organizations, this research draws a panoramic picture of and provides more comprehensive insights into the policy influence of Chinese social organizations.

Some of these organizations were established by college/university students. Students' environmental organizations are more prosperous than those in other fields. However, this research excludes students' organizations from the sample because of their limited capacity and independence. Students' organizations generally lack resources, expertise, and access to the government to influence public policies. In addition, they usually confine their activities to school

campuses or the student population. More importantly, the Party structures of colleges/universities and the education system tightly control the management of students' organizations, making their independence more problematic than that of ordinary social organizations. For example, the author contacted a prestigious students' organization in Beijing for potential cooperation in conducting surveys. However, the organization refused, citing possible troubles caused by the intervention from the university committee of the CCYL that manages the organization. Therefore, students' organizations are supposed to be generally inactive in influencing policies. To test this proposition, Chapter Eight studies seven intercollegiate environmental organizations and finds it valid when external driving forces do not influence those organizations.

The author developed a directory of social organizations based on multiple sources. The MOCA published a list of national-level social organizations in 2007. The China Development Brief, a renowned NGO research institution in Beijing, established an NGO directory section on its website and has continued to update the information. Some organizations in specific fields also published directories. For example, the All China Environment Federation (ACEF), a prominent environmental GONGO, published a directory of environmental organizations in 2008; the Aizhixing Institute of Health Education (Aizhixing) published a directory of HIV/AIDS NGOs in China in 2005, and the National Center for AIDS/STD Control and Prevention (NCAIDS) in the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the China HIV/AIDS Information Network (CHAIN) published another directory in this field in 2010. Other lists were found by searching relevant research, media reports, and internet webpages. The author isolated social organizations in the seven fields from all these lists and searched on the internet for each organization's information. Only organizations that conform to the abovementioned criteria were retained in the final dataset. Insiders, including researchers and organizational leaders,

recommended some social organizations. They were also included in the directory if they met the criteria. This research includes internet websites in these seven fields as a part of bottom-up informal organizations. Commercial websites, websites established by governments and institutions with official backgrounds, and websites with local place names in their titles were excluded. The dataset is by no means all-inclusive, but the author has made every effort to compile as many social organizations as possible in the seven fields that meet these criteria. The dataset comprised 309 social organizations as of 2012, including 132 top-down and 177 bottom-up organizations. In the following decade, 60 newly formed organizations were added to the dataset, while 110 organizations ceased working. As of 2022, the dataset comprised 259 living social organizations, including 135 top-down and 124 bottom-up organizations. Chapter Ten presents more details and analyses.

1.3.3 Data Collection

The author applied direct ways, including interviews and surveys, and indirect ways to collect first-hand and secondary data.

From August 2009 to August 2012, the author conducted 122 interviews in four rounds of fieldwork in China. One hundred and nine interviews were with organizational leaders and a few rank-and-file members, while 13 were with experts studying social organizations, government officials, and relevant corporate leaders. Most were face-to-face interviews and lasted for one to three hours. Others were phone interviews or online interviews via instant messaging programs or emails. These digital tools helped overcome long distances or privacy concerns. Before each interview, the author collected as much information as possible and designed an individual interview structure for each interviewee. These interviews were semi-structured, i.e., the author asked both common and specific questions regarding particular institutions or persons and adjusted the order of questions according to specific situations. If allowed, the author took precise notes or

recorded the conversations during these interviews and made accurate transcripts afterward. Several organizations wrote summaries in response to the questions after interviews. The interview questions focused on the following areas: the history, mission, and major activities of the organization; policy-related activities, outcomes, and critical cases of influencing policies; and organizational attitudes toward and strategies for engaging the government and other relevant actors.

From January 2010 to August 2012, the author surveyed 212 social organizations, a subset of the original dataset containing 309 organizations. Eventually, 108 valid responses were retrieved. The survey instrument was a questionnaire designed by the author. It collected organizational data on the following aspects: basic organizational information, management practices, inclination to influence policies, policy actions and outcomes, and organizational relationships with external actors, such as the government, constituencies, other domestic social organizations, and international entities. One of the objectives of this research is to find organizational and contextual factors shaping social organizations' policy influence in China. The purpose of the surveys is to quantitatively measure these factors and organizational policy influence and analyze their relationships. Chapter Nine presents the details and results of the surveys.

Another way to contact organizational personnel directly was to participate in their activities, such as meetings and project implementation. This provided opportunities to observe their day-to-day lives and understand their standpoints. For example, by facilitating an organization's draft of a grant proposal in English, the author better understood its urgent needs and policy propositions.

Indirect ways to collect first-hand data included retrieving information from organizations' websites, email lists, blogs, microblogs, or other self-media accounts and collecting their

publications and other original documents such as books, newsletters, pamphlets, DVDs, annual plans/reports, project reports, constitutions, financial statements, and various organizational rules. Secondary data were also collected via indirect ways. These mainly included publications of scholars and other research institutions, media reports, government documents, and comments/reviews by experts or peer organizations in relevant fields. Indirect ways were especially useful in updating organizational information regularly.

1.3.4 Data Analysis

The central unit of analysis for this research is the organization. Although this research sometimes involves organizational leaders or cross-organizational alliances, it treats them as organizational features instead of focal units of analysis. The organizational field becomes the unit of analysis in some parts of Chapter Ten. Nevertheless, the analysis is based on the findings of the preceding chapters.

As introduced before, this research aims to understand whether and how Chinese social organizations influence public policies and explore the factors shaping their policy influence. To fill the gaps in the existing literature by tackling critical underexamined or unexplored issues, an anatomic scan of each organization in the dataset is necessary. After confirming each organization's policy influence, strategy in influencing policies, and critical organizational features, especially its relationship with the government, comparative studies disclose similarities and discrepancies in these cases. Accordingly, similar cases are classified into a common mode of policy (non)influence, and different cases form diverse modes of policy (non)influence. Consequently, an analytical framework is constructed based on these modes of policy (non)influence. Chapters two to eight present in-depth case studies to typify each policy (non)influence mode. In addition, comparative case studies across different organizational fields further test the framework's validity. This research employs this inductive method based on

comparative case studies to analyze qualitative data.

Data collected from the surveys were quantified into variables to measure organizations' policy influence (dependent variables) and various factors that may impact organizations' policy influence (independent variables). Chapter Nine is devoted to statistical analyses based on these quantitative data. Various statistical techniques, such as univariate analysis, bivariate analysis, and multivariate regressions, are applied to discover the descriptive statistics of key variables and the relations between variables. This chapter tests three groups of hypotheses to find evidence for the three leading theories applied or tested in the existing research—resource mobilization theory, resource dependence theory, and institutional theory. To test resource mobilization theory, the chapter hypothesizes that organizational size, formalization and professionalization, and connections with other domestic social organizations, constituencies, and international entities are positively associated with organizations' policy influence. To test resource dependence theory, the chapter hypothesizes that official funding in organizations' revenues is negatively associated with organizations' policy influence. To test institutional theory, the chapter hypothesizes that official registration status, official origination, close relationships with the government, and personal connections with government officials foster organizations' policy influence. The findings of the chapter support resource mobilization theory and institutional theory but fail to verify resource dependence theory.

1.3.5 The Analytical Framework

As reviewed before, the existing literature has applied various theoretical frameworks to study social organizations' policy influence in China, and most studies accept that state-society relations are a crucial factor in shaping organizations' policy influence. However, they circumvent entirely the civil society/state corporatism approaches, which dominated the research on China's state-society relations for a long period. Although this drift reflects scholarly efforts to push

forward the research agenda from model-oriented to issue-oriented, it neglects the potential value of the civil society/state corporatism approaches in examining organizations' policy influence. The analytical framework developed in this research inherits the academic tradition by applying the civil society/state corporatism approaches to analyzing social organizations' policy influence in China.

Because this research centers on the policy influence of social organizations, it must consult with policy process theories. Lasswell (1956) and his followers developed a stages model of the policy process that assumes a linear, sequential policy process that can be broken down into several functional stages or phases a given government policy (or program) would go through. Various scholars defined different numbers of stages. Howlett and Ramesh (2003) synthesize and simplify other authors' models into five stages—agenda setting, policy formulation, adoption (or decision making), implementation, and evaluation. The agenda-setting stage refers to the process through which a problem is identified as public interest and placed on the government's agenda. At the policy formulation stage, a policy is formulated by examining various options. At the adoption or decision-making stage, policymakers formally adopt a policy solution. At the implementation stage, policy implementation entities, usually government agencies, carry out a policy to make it work in practice. The evaluation stage involves activities to evaluate a policy to verify whether its effects are aligned with original objectives. In the context of China, debates over policy solutions at the formal adoption stage are rare. Instead, a policy solution is usually determined at the formulation stage, making policy adoption only procedurally meaningful. Therefore, the analytical framework mainly incorporates the other four stages. Furthermore, the framework treats policy initiatives as essential signs of active policy participation. Although policy initiatives may arise in any policy stage, they appear most possibly in the agenda-setting stage while least likely in the

implementation stage. Sporadic studies apply the stages model to analyze social organizations' policy influence in China (Wang, 2008; Du, 2012; Cai et al., 2022), but they overlook the fact that organizations' participation in different policy stages indicates different degrees of policy influence in the context of China. This research discloses this association and integrates it into the analytical framework.

Social organizations' policy influence is also closely linked to the representation of their constituencies. They deliver the opinions of their constituencies into the policy process and seek solutions to crucial policy issues. It is especially important for those organizations representing and serving underprivileged groups. Guo and Musso (2007) extend Pitkin's (1967) four dimensions of representation to five dimensions—formal, descriptive, participatory, substantive, and symbolic representation—and argue that the former three dimensions are different means of achieving the latter two dimensions. In these five dimensions, substantive representation is particularly relevant to the policy influence of social organizations.¹³ Substantive representation means acting in the interest of the represented, in a manner responsive to them (Pitkin 1967, 209). This dimension of representation occurs when an organization acts in the interest of its constituents (Guo and Musso 2007, 312). It provides tangible benefits in terms of agendas, policies, and activities reflective of the interests of constituents (Guo and Zhang 2013, 329). Consistent with the notion of substantive representation, the analytical framework incorporates social organizations' representation of the interests of their constituencies as an essential dimension.

The analytical framework is built on these theoretical foundations. However, its formation also relies on the anatomic scan of each organization and comparative case studies within and across various organizational fields. The framework is a result of combining theoretical deductions

¹³ As discussed in Chapter Ten, descriptive representation is also relevant to a finding of this research.

and inductive generalizations of practical cases. In fact, the author fully developed the framework after investigating the women's field and the health field and improved it when studying other fields. Chapter Two and Chapter Three show the process of developing this framework. It is introduced here to guide the research. Table 1.1 shows critical points of the framework.

The framework consists of six modes of policy (non)influence¹⁴—active state corporatism, passive state corporatism, symbolic state corporatism, embedded pluralism, critical pluralism, and silent pluralism. The former three are found in top-down social organizations, while the latter three are identified in bottom-up social organizations. Symbolic state corporatist organizations and silent pluralist organizations have little policy influence, while organizations in the other four categories at least have some policy influence.

¹⁴ For convenience, this research often uses the terms “mode of policy influence” or “policy influence mode” to denote “mode of policy (non)influence.”

Table 1.1 The Analytical Framework: Six Modes of Policy (Non)Influence

		policy participation	policy influence			interest representation
			willingness	actions	effectiveness	
top-down organizations	active state corporatism	granted power to participate; going through all policy stages; policy initiatives	high	high	high	collecting and articulating opinions actively; influencing policies based on these opinions; may connect the grassroots to the government; limitations exist
	passive state corporatism	no granted power to participate; cannot go through all policy stages; few policy initiatives; major entities to implement policies	low	moderate	low	do not reach out to collect and articulate opinions; do not influence policies based on these opinions; may serve as platforms connecting the grassroots and the government
	symbolic state corporatism	no granted power to participate; seldom engage in policy-related activities; may play a minor role in policy implementation; main functions are fellowship activities, public communication, and improving the state's image	low	low	low	do not pay attention to the interests of their supposed-to-be constituencies; do not build long-lasting connections with the grassroots
bottom-up organizations	embedded pluralism	collaborative strategies only; non-confrontational, non-critical, cooperative attitude toward the state; building channels into the official system; relying more on informal channels; trying to participate in all policy stages but no guarantee	high	high	moderate	reaching out to collect and articulate opinions; trying to influence policies based on these opinions; rooted in the grassroots
	critical pluralism	critical attitude toward the state but not opposing the state generally; applying non-collaborative strategies and more aggressive approaches; may work on more politically sensitive issues; relying more on building coalitions; trying to participate in all policy stages but no guarantee	high	high	moderate	reaching out to collect and articulate opinions; trying to influence policies based on these opinions; rooted in the grassroots
	silent pluralism	maintaining silence in the policy arena; focusing on service delivery and having no great interest in policy issues; may lack resources to engage in policy activities	low-moderate	low	low	do not reach out to collect and articulate opinions or influence policies based on these opinions, although may show sympathy

Each mode in the framework is manifested in three dimensions—policy influence, interest representation, and policy participation. As defined above, policy influence has three levels of meaning in this research—willingness, actions, and effectiveness. Policy participation is whether and how an organization participates in the policy process. Regarding top-down organizations, the differentiation of modes lies in the power source of participation—state authorization and empowerment—and the policy stages in which an organization participates. As far as bottom-up organizations are concerned, however, they have little difference in terms of these two indicators. Instead, their attitudes toward the state and approaches to influence policies differentiate their modes. Interest representation is defined in the following three aspects: whether an organization is connected with the grassroots, whether it reaches out to collect and articulate the opinions of its constituents, and whether it tries to influence public policies based on these opinions.

Active state corporatist organizations are highly active in influencing public policies using state-granted de jure or de facto power of participation in the policy process. They can go through all the policy stages and influence policies on their own initiatives. Some organizations may create policies by themselves. They are highly motivated to influence policies and take frequent actions in practice. When they take such actions, they effectively affect policy outcomes. These organizations actively represent the interests of their assigned constituencies by collecting and articulating their opinions and influencing policies based on these opinions. By doing so, they connect grassroots people and organizations to governments to some degree, although limitations exist. Because of their official status, they inherently cannot represent all the demands of all their constituencies, especially those conflicting with the state's interests or social and cultural context. In addition, sometimes, it is difficult for them to find the actual demands of their constituencies because of their bureaucratic working style and overlong administrative chains. In contemporary

China, most mass organizations fall into the category of active state corporatism, but not all of them maintain such a mode of policy influence. Some organizations affiliated with mass organizations and several environmental organizations affiliated with government agencies also fall into this category. However, active state corporatist organizations only embody this mode of policy influence within their respective assigned jurisdictions. When they work in other jurisdictions, they may behave differently.

Passive state corporatist organizations do not possess state-granted power to participate in the policy process. They can hardly participate in the entire policy process, and their participation is seldom based on their own initiatives. Agenda setting is the stage in which these organizations usually refrain from participating. Sometimes, they participate in formulating or evaluating policies. However, their participation is only based on invitations or directives. In addition, they often play a minor role in formulating or evaluating policies and seldom bring forward their policy initiatives in the process. Their primary assigned responsibility is to implement policies in their respective jurisdictions. Because they can acquire many resources from the state and other sources, these organizations serve as major policy implementation entities in their jurisdictions. In general, they are unwilling to influence policies and cannot affect policy outcomes effectively despite their moderate actions to participate in policymaking passively. These organizations do not actively represent the interests of their constituencies by reaching out to collect and articulate their opinions, and neither intentionally bring these opinions to policymakers to influence policies. However, they may strengthen their connections with the grassroots when implementing policies and serve as platforms on which grassroots people and organizations gain some access to the government and convey their opinions and demands.

Symbolic state corporatism neither has state-granted power to participate in the policy

process. Organizations in this category do not engage in policy-related activities except facilitating policy implementation occasionally, whereas they by no means serve as major entities to implement policies. Their main functions are organizing fellowship activities, public communication, and improving the state's image. They are unwilling to influence policies and seldom take action to become involved in the policy process; therefore, they can hardly exert influence on policy outcomes. These organizations do not pay attention to the interests of their supposed-to-be constituencies or only make it a slogan. Unlike passive state corporatist organizations, they do not try to build long-lasting connections with the grassroots and do not serve as platforms to link the grassroots and the government.

Bottom-up organizations in the category of embedded pluralism embed themselves in the restricted political environment and complex sociopolitical networks. They only embrace collaborative strategies to influence policies. Given a dominant Party-state, they follow the rules and keep in contact with the official system. They commonly take a non-confrontational, non-critical, cooperative attitude toward the state and make great efforts to build up channels into official institutions and organizations with official backgrounds. They rely more on informal channels and connections when falling short of open and institutionalized access to the political system. This embeddedness is an effective strategy for them to survive and achieve their organizational goals to some extent. More importantly, it does not necessarily result in encroachments on their organizational autonomy. These organizations try to participate in all policy stages, but their participation and favorable policy outcomes are not guaranteed. They are highly willing to influence policies and take frequent actions in practice, but they cannot achieve their policy goals all the time, and sometimes they only achieve part of the goals. These organizations are active in representing the interests of their constituencies. They reach out to

collect and articulate their opinions regularly and try to influence policies based on these opinions. Compared with active state corporatist organizations, these bottom-up organizations are rooted in the grassroots and understand the genuine demands of their constituencies. They are more willing to represent all the demands of all their constituencies.

In contrast to embedded pluralist organizations, bottom-up organizations in the category of critical pluralism take a critical attitude toward the state. They scrutinize relevant policies and criticize those that contradict their positions and harm the interests of their organizations and constituencies. These organizations embrace non-collaborative strategies and apply more aggressive approaches to influence policies than embedded pluralism. They may write letters, including open letters, to relevant agencies and officials, file/support complaints or administrative lawsuits, apply for disclosure of government information, organize petitions, and submit “citizen proposals” to the NPC or the CPPCC. Compared with other social organizations, they are more inclined to mobilize their constituencies and organize street activities to influence policies. Some organizations even go beyond their usual working areas and involve themselves in more politically sensitive issues. Furthermore, these organizations rely more on building coalitions to influence policies than other social organizations. However, these organizations do not generally oppose the state, i.e., they do not subvert the basic political order of the country and do not refuse to communicate with the official system. A few of them may adopt some collaborative strategies and maintain relatively good relationships with the state. Cooperating with the state may coexist with criticizing the state to different degrees in different organizations. The commonality of these organizations is that they do not seek to collaborate with the state at the cost of sacrificing the right to criticize the state. Like embedded pluralism, they try to participate in all policy stages, but their participation and favorable policy outcomes are not guaranteed. They are also highly willing to

influence policies and take frequent actions in practice. However, their efforts usually result in moderate achievements. Likewise, critical pluralist organizations are rooted in the grassroots. They reach out to collect and articulate the opinions of their constituencies and try to influence policies based on these opinions.

Many bottom-up organizations fall into the category of silent pluralism by focusing on service delivery and maintaining silence in the policy arena. These include not only most informal organizations but many full-fledged organizations with formal constitutions, organizational structures, developing plans, and fixed working places and staff. They may lack the resources to engage in policy activities when facing constraints such as funds, staff, time, and access to policymakers. Some organizations show little interest in policy issues, while others may realize the importance of policy issues and show a willingness to influence policies. However, no organizations in this category take visible actions and can achieve effective policy outcomes. In general, their voices are absent in the policy arena. As grassroots organizations, they understand the conditions of their communities and may show sympathy for their demands. However, they do not reach out to collect and articulate fellow opinions and do not try to influence policies based on these opinions. In rare cases, a few organizations may serve as platforms for mobilizing constituencies to influence policies but do not take policy-related actions themselves.

In top-down organizations, the level of policy influence descends according to the order of active state corporatism, passive state corporatism, and symbolic state corporatism. Among bottom-up organizations, the line of policy influence is drawn between silent pluralism and the other two modes. However, the policy influence of embedded pluralism and critical pluralism has no significant difference. In fact, both modes could effectively achieve policy goals, while both failed sometimes. Organizations falling into both categories try to exert influence in each stage of

the policy process, but their successful participation is contingent on specific cases. In short, their differences are mainly based on attitudes toward the state and strategies adopted to influence policies rather than the level of policy influence.

Because these six modes of policy (non)influence cover a wide range of social organizations, from the most active policy advocates to the least active ones within both top-down and bottom-up organizations, this framework could be applied to analyze the policy influence of all social organizations in China. The following chapters introduce the development of the framework and test its validity in multiple organizational fields.

1.4 Outline of the Research

Chapter Two starts the research from the women's field. By mapping out the policy influence of women's organizations in China, it finds that different policy influences are evident not only between grassroots women's organizations and organizations with official backgrounds but also within these two categories. Both organizational relationships with the state and organizational capacity impact social organizations' policy influence. Two indigenous mainstream modes of policy influence—active state corporatism and embedded pluralism—have emerged in women's organizations. However, not all women's organizations are active policy advocates. Symbolic state corporatism and silent pluralism are identified in top-down and bottom-up women's organizations, respectively. In addition, the chapter documents the rise of a new force, represented by Feminist Voices and the Young Feminist Activism Group, in the Chinese women's movement and the state's crackdowns on this promising troop and China's emerging #MeToo movement.

Mapping out health organizations' policy influence according to their origins and working domains, Chapter Three discovers that the policy influence of health organizations shows different features from those of women's organizations. All top-down organizations, including mass

organizations acting in this field, display a single mode of policy influence—passive state corporatism—by behaving passively in both influencing policies and representing the interests of their constituents. In addition to embedded pluralism and silent pluralism embraced by some health organizations, critical pluralism is revealed as a prominently new mode of policy influence. Therefore, the analytical framework comes into shape and is applied to reclassify women's and health organizations and analyze their policy influence. The analysis reveals some significant trends. The most salient discovery is that the state is more inclined to repress organizations adopting critical pluralism. Consequently, this mode of policy influence has been generally eliminated from both fields.

Chapter Four tests the framework in the field of migrant workers, rural migrant labor engaged in non-agricultural work. As the single top-down social organization in this field, the ACFTU has gone through an evolving route to represent the interests of migrant workers and influence relevant policies. Empowered by the top Party-state leadership, it moved away from symbolic state corporatism, went through passive state corporatism, and eventually reached active state corporatism. Its growth curve proves that policy influence modes of state corporatist organizations stem from the exterior source—state authorization and empowerment. Embedded pluralism is the most significant mode of policy influence in bottom-up social organizations for migrant workers. A few salient organizations in this category indicate that cooperative professionals may have better opportunities to establish relatively harmonious and stable relationships with the government and influence policies more effectively. In contrast, the government closed an exceptional labor website that embraced critical pluralism. As a result, critical pluralism has disappeared from this field.

Chapter Five further tests the framework in social organizations for disabled persons. As

the overarching top-down mass organization, the China Disabled Persons' Federation (CDPF) falls into active state corporatism. However, it does not endow affiliated organizations with the power to participate in the whole policy process. As a result, they only serve as its arms to implement policies and fall into passive state corporatism, showing that policy influence modes of social organizations affiliated with state corporatist organizations result from authorization and empowerment of their supervisory bodies. In bottom-up organizations, the mainstream mode of policy influence is embedded pluralism. Furthermore, this chapter defines reduced embedded pluralism as a subcategory of embedded pluralism. It conforms to the basic characteristics of embedded pluralism, but its policy influence is on a reduced scale. The sole organization in this field that adopted critical pluralism experienced state oppression. However, it has survived by switching to embedded pluralism, a strategy also used by some organizations in other fields. Another consistent finding in these chapters is that the congruence between the demographic characteristics of organizational leaders and those of constituents does not affect organizations' modes of policy influence.

Chapter Six extends the study to social organizations for minors and seniors. Officially representing minors, the ACWF and the CCYL act actively to influence minors-related policies, albeit the CCYL suffers from more limitations. Their affiliated organizations spread in all three categories of top-down organizations, depending on roles authorized by their supervisory organizations. Other top-down organizations affiliated with government agencies or passive state corporatist organizations play a passive role. Silent pluralism is the primary mode in bottom-up organizations for minors. Only one organization adopting embedded pluralism stands out to actively influence policies. In the field of seniors, neither top-down organizations nor most bottom-up ones actively represent seniors' interests and influence policies related to them. Senior people

are the most underrepresented group studied in this research. The seemingly peak organization in this field falls into symbolic state corporatism. In addition to a cluster of symbolic state corporatist organizations found in the women's field, another cluster of such organizations exists in the field of seniors. Only those organizations affiliated with several government agencies assuming major responsibilities in this field fall into passive state corporatism. Silent pluralism also dominates bottom-up organizations in the seniors' field. Only two organizations adopt embedded pluralism to influence policies. Critical pluralism is absent in both fields, and no organizations in these two fields have ever suffered from state oppression.

Chapters seven and eight, after studying six fields of human service organizations, investigate top-down and bottom-up environmental organizations, respectively. The Xi Jinping administration has continuously stressed environmental protection and elevated constructing the ecological civilization to a basic state policy. Both top-down and bottom-up environmental organizations have made remarkable achievements in this eco-friendly context.

Although many studies focus on Chinese environmental organizations, top-down organizations in this field have remained under-researched. Chapter Seven finds all three modes of policy (non)influence in these organizations. With the absence of mass organizations, most organizations affiliated with government agencies behave passively in influencing policies and representing the interests of their constituents. However, three top-down organizations affiliated with two agencies that assume major responsibilities in the environmental field fall into the category of active state corporatism, a unique phenomenon in this research. Compared with mass organizations, they suffer from more limited capacity and effectiveness in influencing policies. Except for one special case, most top-down environmental organizations affiliated with other institutions fall into the category of symbolic state corporatism. In comparison, government

agencies tend to assign some policy functions to affiliated organizations to facilitate their own work. Another finding in this chapter is that organizational leadership was vital in changing a few organizations' trajectories.

Contrary to the monolithic view in the existing literature regarding Chinese environmental organizations, Chapter Eight discovers variations in bottom-up environmental organizations. All three modes of policy (non)influence are identified, and each category includes a bunch of organizations. In fact, those organizations with which many researchers and practitioners are familiar may take different modes to influence policies. Furthermore, many environmental organizations maintain silence in the policy arena. Two environmental organizations adopting critical pluralism suffered from state oppression. However, a number of organizations adopting critical pluralism not only survived but are thriving, which is in contrast to the fact that critical pluralism has disappeared or never existed in other fields in this research. Although those organizations adopting embedded pluralism usually do not launch breath-taking environmental campaigns, their persistent daily work could also significantly influence policies. Silent pluralist organizations lack the willingness, the capacity, or both to influence policies. In addition, a higher possibility of running out of business in this category shows that limited organizational capacity negatively impacts not only policy influence mode but also the chance of survival. Students' organizations are generally inactive in influencing policies unless they are under the influence of external driving forces.

Chapter Nine is a quantitative analysis of the factors shaping the policy influence of social organizations in China, using the data collected from the surveys conducted by the author. This chapter tests three leading theories in the existing body of literature—resource mobilization theory, resource dependence theory, and institutional theory. Accordingly, it develops three groups of

relevant hypotheses and classifies factors/independent variables based on these three theoretical perspectives. Applying multiple statistical techniques, the chapter provides empirical evidence to support resource mobilization theory and institutional theory, but it fails to verify resource dependence theory. In addition, it verifies some important findings of previous chapters. A unique contribution of this chapter is to test three theories by juxtaposing and comparing three dimensions of policy influence. Furthermore, it fills the gap in the existing literature by testing two underexamined or unexplored factors—formalization and professionalization of organizations and international connections—and finds their significantly positive effects on all dimensions of policy influence. Finally, based on these findings, the chapter discusses the practical implications for practitioners operating social organizations in China.

The final chapter concludes the research with three themes—the formation of modes of policy influence, the government’s attitudes toward social organizations, and the major contributions of this research to the existing literature. In the second theme, comparisons of organizational quantities and the distribution of policy influence modes in 2012 and 2022 discover the changes under the Xi Jinping administration. Except for environmental organizations, critical pluralism disappeared or never existed in all organizational fields, resulting in coercive and mimetic isomorphism claimed by institutional theory. The exception of the environmental field stems from its favorable political opportunity structures. In addition, the chapter specifies the limitations of this research. Finally, it discusses the implications of this research for China’s political development.

Chapter 2 WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

This chapter will study women's organizations. Women have been a conventional underprivileged group in the history of China. In the reform era, more infringements on women's rights have emerged. Gender issues, such as education, employment, wealth distribution discrimination, inadequate labor protection, sexual harassment/assault and domestic violence against women, and damages caused by coercive family planning, have worsened and called for more actions. As Currier (2009, 40) points out, economic reform creates more inequality, less economic stability, and increasing dissatisfaction among women. Women's organizations in China are expected to confront these challenges and influence relevant policies. In China's social organizations, the women's field was the first one that established broad and direct connections with international society. Furthermore, women have been a long-term work object (*gongzuo mubiao*) and the political base of the CCP. As a result, these organizations may hold more space in the policy arena. Therefore, this field of social organizations is selected to start the research.

2.1 The Development of Women's Organizations in China

The CCP has incorporated what it calls "women's work (*funü gongzuo*)" in its revolutionary agenda since its founding in the 1920s. The gender ideology of the CCP derived from May Fourth feminism and the Marxist critique of the family, which was based primarily on the writings of Friedrich Engels (Gilmartin 1993, 300). Holding the view that "the degree of woman's emancipation is the natural measure of the general emancipation" (Wang 1996, 193), the CCP has made great efforts to promote women's emancipation for the practical purpose of mobilizing women to take part in socialist revolution and construction. Paradoxically, a patriarchal gender system has also been constructed in the body politic of the CCP since its early years

(Gilmartin, 1993). As a consequence, “state feminism” is often used to label socialist gender politics (Wang, 2005; Yang, 1999). As Wang (2005, 519) explains, when this term is applied to China, it often portrays a paradoxical image of a state patriarch championing women's liberation, although with vacillation and inconsistency.

The organizational embodiment of state feminism in China is the All China Women's Federation (ACWF), established in March 1949, seven months before the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC). As a mass organization, the ACWF is granted the status to represent Chinese women of all ethnic groups in all walks of life to fight for continued liberation under the leadership of the CCP. It is the bridge and the conduit between the CCP, the government, and the masses of women, and serves as one of the essential social pillars of the state power.¹ With local branches and group members at every administrative level, the Chinese government has announced the ACWF to be the biggest NGO to improve women's status in China (Liu 2001, 144).

However, the ACWF is not the sole organization working closely with the Party-state regarding women-related issues. The Department of Women Workers (DWW) under the All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU)² takes charge of the affairs of female members of trade unions, whose total number had reached 119 million by September 2017³. Established in 1980, the China Family Planning Association (CFPA) has grown into another giant mass organization with over 94 million members and almost one million divisions at every administrative level. Supervised by the former National Population and Family Planning Commission (NPFPC)⁴, the

¹ See the Constitution of the ACWF.

² This department is under the official leadership of the Women Workers' Committee of the ACFTU, which has divisions at every level of trade unions. However, the Women Workers' Committee is a nominal institution with its office in the DWW. The DWW is the executive entity taking charge of the affairs of women workers.

³ See a news report titled Protecting Women Workers in All Aspects that appeared on Workers' Daily, September 28, 2018.

⁴ In March 2013, this commission was dissolved and incorporated into the former Ministry of Health (MOH) and the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), respectively. Since then, National Health and Family Planning Commission was founded to replace the MOH and served as the CFPA's supervisory body. In March 2018, National Health Commission was established by incorporating National Health and Family Planning Commission and some relevant parts from other agencies. For convenience, this research uses MOH to represent the former Ministry of Health, the former National Health and Family

CFPA aimed to facilitate the enforcement of the one-child policy (Deng and Ji 2011, 269-270). Since 2013 when the NPFPC was dissolved, the former Ministry of Health (MOH), reorganized as the National Health Commission in 2018, has served as its new supervisory body. Since the one-child policy was replaced by the two-child policy in 2015 and the three-child policy in 2021⁵, the CFPA has become a more supportive organization for increasingly relaxed family planning. Because compulsory family planning has been implemented in China for a few decades and influenced the life of most Chinese women, the CFPA is included in this research as a women's organization.

In the 1980s, only a few women's organizations existed, and most maintained a kinship with the ACWF system. For example, the China Women's Development Foundation, founded in 1988, is one of the subordinate units of the ACWF. The ACWF is also the supervisory body of another older association, the China Association of Marriage and Family founded in 1981. The China Association of Women Entrepreneurs, though supervised by the State Asset Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council, also maintains a close relationship with the ACWF. In addition to these organizations with official backgrounds, several bottom-up organizations were also founded in this decade in the wake of the negative consequences of economic reform for women. Li Xiaojiang established the Henan Women's Study Center in 1985 and the Women Research Center of Zhengzhou University two years later. Gao Xiaoxian founded Shaanxi Research Association for Women and Family in 1986. In 1988, Wang Xingjuan created the Women's Research Institute in Beijing, currently known as the Maple Women's Psychological Counseling Center (the Maple Center hereafter).

Planning Commission, and the current National Health Commission.

⁵ The One-child policy allows one couple to have at most one child, while the two-child and three-child policies allow one couple to have at most two children and three children, respectively.

The 1995 United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) and the accompanying NGO Forum held in Beijing was the turning point for the development of women's organizations and many social organizations in other fields in China. It was an eye-opening and empowering experience for Chinese women activists, and it introduced both the concept and the function of NGOs into China (Wang, 1996; Liu, 2001; Zhang, 2001; Kaufman, 2012a; Shen, 2016; Wu 2021, 312, 316). To show that China has a decent number of women's organizations, the Chinese government loosened its control over establishing social organizations and encouraged their founding in different sectors before the FWCW. These organizations usually have some official background. For example, the China Association of Mayors' Division of Women Mayors, the Association for Women Scientists and Technologists, the China Women Judges Association, the China Women Procurators Association, and the China Medical Women's Association were all founded in the early to mid-1990s (White, Howell and Shang 1996, 91-96). Research institutions concerning women's issues were also set up in this period. These include not only official think tanks, such as the Women's Studies Institute of China (a subordinate unit of the ACWF) and the Women/Gender Studies Center of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), but also various women's studies centers in universities⁶. In addition to these organizations with official backgrounds to some extent, the FWCW and NGO Forum generated flourishing grassroots activism in China. Popular women's organizations, salons, hotlines, and internet websites sprang up throughout the country (Howell, 2003). Among them, The Beijing Cultural Development Center for Rural Women⁷, including an internal sector called the Migrant Women's Club, the

⁶ In the first half of 1993, there were only four women's studies centers in China's four universities: Zhengzhou University, Hangzhou University, Peking University, and Tianjin Normal University. In less than two years, from September 1993 to May 1995, 18 women's studies centers were established, with another 13 added by December 1999 (Chow et al. 2004, 164-165). By the end of 2015, there had been more than 50 women's/gender studies centers in universities. (See online news at http://edu.people.com.cn/n1/2015/1220/c1053-27952263.html?agt=122_217, accessed Jan. 2, 2020).

⁷ This organization originated from a magazine named Rural Women Knowing All, founded in 1993 by Xie Lihua, one of the editors of China Women's News. China Women's News is the official newspaper operated by the ACWF. Xie Lihua employed

Center for Women's Law Studies and Legal Services of Peking University, the Xishuangbanna Women and Children Counseling and Legal Aid Center, and the Henan Community Education Research Center stand out as the most prominent women's organizations in China. In 2012, a group of young feminist activists who called themselves the Young Feminist Activism Group (*qingnian nüquan xingdongpai*) emerged as a new force. Centering on the agenda advocated by Feminist Voices, an influential media platform for feminist activism, the group changed the landscape of the Chinese women's movement before the state suppressed it.

The FWCW and NGO Forum also introduced the ethos of global feminism into China, which has impacted native state feminism and changed the feminist discourse in China (Wang, 1996; Yang, 1999; Li, 1999; Zhang, 2001; Milwertz and Bu, 2007; Xu, 2009; Wang and Zhang, 2010; Shen, 2016). From then on, the Chinese women's movement has embraced the global feminist agenda and has merged with the international women's movement (Wang, 1996; He, 2003; Liu, 2006). With the desire to "connect to the international tracks (*yu guoji jiegui*)", the ACWF has attempted to open its ideological system and change its mode of work (Jin, 2001; Liu, 2001; Zhang, 2001). More importantly, the Chinese government has sanctioned this new agenda (Wang, 1996). Hosting the FWCW and signing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (PFA), the Chinese government must improve women's status under the guidance of official international documents. Women's issues, as well as women's organizations, have gained more visibility and legitimacy in China. As a result, Chinese women's groups have become the first field of social organizations in China that have such broad, direct connections with their counterparts in foreign countries (Zhang 2001, 176).

As perceived by the Party-state, women's issues were relatively less of a threat to the

her connections with the newspaper and the ACWF to develop the organization (Tai 2015, 52-55).

regime than other politically sensitive issues. Furthermore, because of the CCP's traditional agenda of women's emancipation and its reaffirmation of the commitment to gender equality when hosting the FWCW⁸, it might grant women's organizations more opportunities to participate in decision-making and more freedom to conduct their activities. Therefore, this research starts with women's organizations to investigate the policy influence of Chinese social organizations. However, since Xi Jinping took power, the Party-state has appeared to be more skeptical about the actions of some bottom-up women's organizations and activists. Although it did not significantly change official discourse and limit the activities of official women's organizations, some bottom-up organizations were forced to shut down, and a few activists were even detained, showing that the state's attitude toward a particular type of organization may change over time.

2.2 Mapping out the Policy Influence of Women's Organizations

Women's organizations in China have the same distribution pattern along the autonomy continuum as other Chinese social organizations, i.e., organizations with different degrees of autonomy coexist in a social space. Various scholars have put forward multiple ways to classify social organizations in China. For example, White, Howell, and Shang (1996, 31-32) classify registered social organizations as official, semi-official, and popular organizations. Ding (1998) and Ru (2004) use variant concepts of civil society and corporatism to classify them. This chapter categorizes national-level women's organizations in Beijing according to their origins. These organizations can be divided into two groups—organizations with official backgrounds and grassroots organizations. The first group is further categorized as mass organizations, other top-down organizations, and research institutions, including official think tanks and university centers.

⁸ Jiang Zemin, Chinese president of the time, announced at the opening ceremony of the FWCW that equality between men and women was a basic state policy of China. In 2005, it was included in the revised Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests.

The second group is further divided into formal and informal organizations.

As introduced above, the oldest group of women's organizations comprises three mass organizations, guaranteed special status and serving as arms of the government. A few government-organized NGOs (GONGOs) with close relationships with mass organizations were also established after China's reform and opening up. More top-down women's organizations were set up in the 1990s because China hosted the FWCW. These organizations are in multiple sectors, most of which are habitats of elite women. Gradually, the ACWF accepted them as its organizational members. Research institutions were a separate group in this organizational boom, which can be further broken down into two sub-categories. The first sub-category is official think tanks, such as the Women's Studies Institute of China (WSIC) as a subordinate unit of the ACWF and the Women/Gender Studies Center of the CASS. The second sub-category includes numerous women's studies centers in universities. In comparison with the first sub-category, these centers are more alienated from the state, and their inception was often driven by combined bottom-up and top-down forces⁹. However, considering the universities in which these centers reside are all run by the government and provide critical resources to them, these women's studies centers still have official backgrounds to some extent. By contrast, grassroots women's organizations do not attribute their origins to state sponsorship. Although some of their founders worked for institutions inside the official system, and some have invited people with official backgrounds to reside on their boards or advisory committees, they were not created from state initiatives, and they enjoy the independence of finance, human resources, and management. While some grassroots organizations have grown into full-fledged organizations with formal constitutions and rules,

⁹ The Women's Studies Center of Peking University serves as a typical example. According to Tao (1996), the center was originally a spontaneous salon organized by women professors from different university departments. In 1990, university authorities recognized it as a formal entity and further strengthened it in 1992 in preparing for the FWCW.

organizational structures, development plans, and fixed working places and staff members, others are still in progress with informal organizing. The least organized groups are those cyber-groups communicating through websites, online forums, or email lists.

Table 2.1 shows the general pattern of the policy influence of women's organizations.

Table 2.1 General Pattern of the Policy Influence of Women's Organizations in China

	organizations with official backgrounds				grassroots organizations	
policy influence	mass organizations	other top-down organizations	research institutions		formal	informal
			official think tanks	university centers		
willingness	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low-Moderate
actions	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low
effectiveness	High	Low	High	Low	Moderate	Low

2.2.1 Mass Organizations

All three mass organizations are highly active in influencing public policies. The ACWF was the drafter and major reviser of such basic laws about women as the Marriage Law, the Law on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests (the Women's Law hereafter), and the Anti-domestic Violence Law. It was also involved in other legislation impacting women's life, e.g., the Law on Maternal and Infant Health Care and its Implementation Measures, General Principles of the Civil Law, the Law on Population and Family Planning, the Education Law, the Rural Land Contract Law, the Property Law, the Law of Succession, the Employment Promotion Law, the Law

on Employment Contracts, the Social Insurance Law, and the Civil Code. In addition, it influences the judicial system. For example, with the ACWF's advocacy and cooperation, the Supreme People's Court promulgated a judicial interpretation in 2018 to clarify the standards of identifying joint debts of spouses. In 2020, for another example, the ACWF and the Supreme People's Procuratorate jointly issued a notice to establish cooperative mechanisms to strengthen the legal protection of women and children. In the document, the Supreme People's Procuratorate guarantees to seek the ACWF's opinions when it enacts policies pertinent to the rights and interests of women and children. Cooperating with the judicial system, the ACWF also provides various forms of legal aid to women and children throughout the country. From 2008 to 2013, the ACWF participated in the enactment/revision of almost 130 national policies¹⁰; it participated in the enactment/revision of more than 80 national policies in the next five years.¹¹ The ACWF has been the major advocate, drafter, and implementation entity of four Outlines for the Development of Chinese Women (1995-2000, 2001-2010, 2011-2020, and 2021-2030), which started as the Chinese government's response to the PFA and have served as general guidance to women's development in China. In 2013, the ACWF launched a movement to scrutinize the whole policy process and evaluate all policies to guarantee equal rights for women, which it named Policy Evaluation Mechanisms for Gender Equality. With the support of the NPC and the State Council, it had successfully established such mechanisms at the national level and in 31 province-level administrative regions by 2022¹², setting a precedent for other mass organizations.

Most mass organizations, including the ACWF, have the power to issue policy documents

¹⁰ See the ACWF's work report at the eleventh national congress held in October 2013, available at http://www.women.org.cn/art/2013/10/28/art_54_13054.html, accessed Oct. 5, 2015.

¹¹ See the ACWF's work report at the twelfth national congress held in October 2018, available at <http://12th.womenvoice.cn/n1/2018/1104/c421813-30380715.html>, accessed Nov. 7, 2018.

¹² The online news of the People's Daily is available at <http://politics.people.com.cn/n1/2022/0826/c1001-32511731.html>, accessed April 24, 2023.

by themselves. These policy documents are as effective as departmental rules (*bumen guizhang*) issued by central government agencies or equivalent authorities. For example, the ACWF promulgated the ACWF Interim Measures of Interviews for Promoting Women's Equal Employment in 2016. This policy urges local ACWF branches to interview any employers who are suspected of gender-based discrimination in employment. It is worth mentioning that the ACWF pushed many policies through the National Working Committee on Children and Women (NWCCW), a trans-ministry institution within the State Council with its office in the ACWF and a result of the ACWF's lobbying (Zhang 2001, 166). Moreover, the ACWF has coordinated with the CCP and government organs to issue numerous regulatory documents pertaining to women's issues or to launch policy-related actions. For example, in 2019, the ACWF, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security (MOHRSS), the Ministry of Education (MOE), and six other agencies jointly promulgated a notice to prohibit discriminatory practices of employers in recruitment; by 2019, the ACWF had conducted four rounds of nationwide surveys of women's social status in cooperation with National Bureau of Statistics. In addition to participating in national policymaking, the ACWF encourages local branches to influence local policies. For instance, local women's federations had pushed 26 province-level administrative regions to enact policies to protect women's rights when issuing certificates of contracted management of rural lands by 2015.¹³ According to a report by Huang Qingyi¹⁴, then vice chairwoman and first member of the Secretariat of the ACWF, from 2002 to 2004, women's federations above the county level participated in enacting or revising 1,194 laws, regulations, and regulatory documents. In the same period, they also submitted 5,325 proposals through women representatives of the People's

¹³ An online report of China Women's News, available at http://www.women.org.cn/art/2016/1/14/art_19_35777.html, accessed Nov. 12, 2018.

¹⁴ Address at the Meeting on Rights Protection Work of the ACWF, available at <http://www.women.org.cn/allnews/1402/17.html>, accessed Aug. 14, 2009.

Congress and female members of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) at all levels. From 2013 to 2018, local branches of the ACWF throughout the country participated in the enactment/revision of more than 3,000 local policies.¹⁵ As Chapter Six will show, the ACWF is also one of the mass organizations that officially represent minors and actively influence relevant policies. Chapter Six will further investigate the role of the ACWF provided that some minors-related policies are also pertinent to women.

Most organizations affiliated with the ACWF participate in its policy activities within their respective jurisdictions. Some conduct essential research projects for the ACWF and are often involved in its policy actions. These include the Chinese Women's Research Society, the China Association of Marriage and Family Studies, the China Research Society of Family Culture, Huakun Women's Life Survey Center, and Huakun Women Consumption Guidance Center. With its executive office in the WSIC, the Chinese Women's Research Society serves as an extension for the institute to reach a broader range of institutions and geographical regions. Other organizations facilitate the ACWF to implement relevant policies in multiple aspects. These include the China Women's Development Foundation, the Chinese Association for Women's Newspapers and Periodicals, and All China Women's Association for Hand Knitting. The China Women's Development Foundation mainly conducts fund-raising. It has funded many of the ACWF's renowned projects, such as Water Cellar for Mothers, Health Express for Mothers, and Revolving Loans for Mothers. Despite their nominally independent status, these organizations are different from other top-down women's organizations because they are affiliations of the ACWF. The ACWF serves as these organizations' common supervisory body and provides them with the most necessary resources. They were all established out of the ACWF's initiatives and operate in

¹⁵ See the ACWF's work report at the twelfth national congress held in October 2018, available at <http://12th.womenvoice.cn/n1/2018/1104/c421813-30380715.html>, accessed Nov. 7, 2018.

assigned jurisdictions of the “women’s work.” Therefore, this chapter treats these organizations as an inherent part of the ACWF system. In this sense, the WSIC is no different from these organizations. However, because it is the most crucial research institution within the ACWF system and a prominent official think tank in women’s studies, it is also categorized in the group of official think tanks and discussed separately. A few organizations affiliated with the ACWF work in the field of minors. Chapter Six will study them.

The DWW under the ACFTU also actively participated in policymaking. It was involved in almost all the laws and regulations related to female workers, such as the Employment Promotion Law, the Law on Employment Contracts, the Social Insurance Law, the Work Safety Law, the Law on the Prevention and Treatment of Occupational Diseases, the Law of Population and Family Planning, the Law on the Protection of Minors, and the Women’s Law. It was the advocate and one of the primary drafters of the Regulations Concerning the Labor Protection of Female Workers enacted in 1988, and its upgraded replacement—the Special Rules on the Labor Protection of Female Employees enacted in 2012, which covers all female workers, improves protective standards, and strengthens enforcement. Ever since then, the DWW has pushed local governments to enact this regulation’s implementation measures and lobbied and participated in inspections of the implementation of the regulation conducted by the National People’s Congress (NPC) or relevant government agencies. In addition to providing legal aid to women workers and taking part in handling typical cases, the DWW has launched a campaign called “action month for the rights protection of women workers” every year since 2015. It also advocated for revising the Regulations Concerning the Scope of Prohibited Work for Female Workers promulgated in 1990 for a few years, but it has not achieved the goal. A significant achievement for the DWW is to push enterprises and trade unions across the country to sign “special collective contracts for the

protection of female workers,” which is a concrete measure to take the articles from merely being written to coming to fruition in real life. Since 2015, the DWW has taken a series of actions to facilitate the implementation of the two-child policy and the three-child policy. Taking advantage of guaranteed seats in the CPPCC, the DWW submitted relevant proposals calling for policy change every year. In 2016, it pushed the ACFTU and nine other agencies to issue a policy document launching a national campaign to establish workplace lactation rooms. In 2017, the DWW surveyed women workers’ concerns over maternity. According to the results, it encouraged local branches to provide various services to help working women, such as childcare and after-school programs, training domestic workers, and supporting employment and entrepreneurship. In 2018, the DWW conducted another survey of gender equality in workplaces. Accordingly, the ACFTU and eight other agencies/organizations promulgated the Notice of Regulating Recruitment Practices and Promoting Women’s Employment in February 2019. The ACFTU released a guidebook next month. In addition, the DWW actively participated in the policy change of merging maternity insurance into health insurance.

The CFPA participated in formulating legislation, regulations, and outlines on population and family planning, e.g., the Law on Population and Family Planning. Its proposal of subsidizing and assisting one-child families was adopted into the law. The CFPA also lobbied the NPFPC and the Ministry of Finance (MOF) to enact specific policies to implement the measure and launched projects to facilitate the implementation. The CFPA is influential in local policymaking because prominent leaders of local CCP and governments concurrently hold many chairman posts in its local offices. Some leaders of the CFPA are representatives of the NPC or members of the CPPCC. Taking this advantage, the CFPA often submits policy proposals to the NPC and the CPPCC.¹⁶ The

¹⁶ The author’s interview with a major leader of the CFPA on Sep. 15, 2009, in Beijing.

most far-reaching policy change the CFPA had pushed was the implementation of “grassroots self-government on family planning,” a reform that aimed to change state compulsion on family planning to self-government. Facing a series of problems, such as declining fertility levels and labor shortages, imbalanced sex ratios, and population aging, China relaxed its one-child policy. In 2013, the birth of a second child was allowed if at least one spouse was a singleton. In 2015, the Fifth Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee of the CCP announced the two-child policy. The NPC revised the Law on Population and Family Planning at the end of the year.¹⁷ When the CFPA held its 8th National Congress in 2016, Xi Jinping directed the CFPA to accomplish six critical tasks, including protecting the rights of families practicing family planning. Since then, the CFPA has started to provide legal aid to these families. In 2018, the State Council promulgated the CFPA Reform Plan, which requires the CFPA to provide various services to facilitate the implementation of the two-child policy and to integrate these services with grassroots social governance. To fulfill these requirements, the CFPA put forward new policy initiatives. For example, Wang Peian, executive vice president of the CFPA and a CPPCC member, submitted proposals regarding developing care services for infants and toddlers to the CPPCC in 2018 and 2019. The CFPA then participated in enacting the Opinions of the General Office of the State Council on Advancing the Development of Care Services for Infants and Toddlers under the Age of Three, promulgated in April 2019.¹⁸ For another example, in September 2019, it jointly issued a policy document with the MOH and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MOA) to

¹⁷ Scharping (2019) documents and analyzes the whole process of the policy change. Facing increasing demographic and economic pressures, the opinions of critical experts eventually gained the upper hand under the Xi Jinping administration. Their influence increased by allying with societal forces, mass media, and reform-minded politicians. Peng Peiyun, former chairwoman and honorary chairwoman of the ACWF, played an important role in terminating the one-child policy (Scharping 2019, 345). Applying the advocacy coalition framework, Li and Wong (2020) also identify two expert-led minority advocacy coalitions that pushed for policy change by exploiting opportunities brought about by internal and external perturbations. Amalia and Azizah (2019) emphasize the pressures from transnational advocacy networks formed by local NGOs and activists, international NGOs, the U.S., the United Nations, and European Parliament, as a cause for the policy change.

¹⁸ See the CFPA news at http://www.chinafpa.org.cn/xwzx/gzdt/201803/t20180321_12323.html, and http://www.chinafpa.org.cn/xwzx/yw/201903/t20190326_43493.html, accessed Jan. 2, 2020.

combine services improving family health with the rural revitalization strategy. In July 2021, the Central Committee of the CCP and the State Council promulgated the three-child policy, and the NPC revised the Law on Population and Family Planning again in the next month. The CFPA has scaled up its fertility and family health services to implement the new policy.

2.2.2 Other Top-down Women's Organizations

This research studies sixteen other top-down women's organizations. They are all organizational members of the ACWF. However, they are not formal affiliations within the ACWF system.¹⁹ Some of them are secondary organizations under top-down institutions that are not in the women's field. Others have these kinds of top-down institutions as their supervisory bodies²⁰, although they are nominally independent.

In contrast to mass organizations, other top-down women's organizations have been unwilling to influence policies. As a result, they seldom take action to become involved in policies and exert real influence. Most organizations in this group have functions of promoting friendship, networking, and international communication, and conducting awarding and training. China Women Photographers' Association, China Female Artists Association, and Women's Committee of Western Returned Scholars Association are only limited to these functions. They are more like fellowship clubs than motivated associations that can be aggressive in interest articulation and representation. Most professional women's organizations also promote professional communication and provide social services using their expertise, such as the Women Planners' Committee of China Association of City Planning, the China Medical Women's Association, China Women's Association for Science and Technology, the China Women Procurators Association, the China Women Judges Association, and the Association of Women Lawyers under the All China

¹⁹ The ACWF has 17 organizational members in total. The DWW is the one that does not belong to this group of 16 organizations. All these 17 organizations are outside the ACWF system, despite their relationships with the ACWF.

²⁰ Chapter Ten will introduce their supervisory bodies in more detail.

Lawyers Association. The Chinese Women Talent Research Society mainly focuses on conducting academic research and communication on developing female talents. Some organizations conduct charity activities such as poverty relief and the provision of specific services to women, minors, seniors, and disabled persons. These include the National Council of Young Women's Christian Associations of China, the China Association of Women Entrepreneurs, the China Association of Mayors' Division of Women Mayors, the China Women Tourism Committee, the China Women's Chamber of Commerce, and the Women's Working Committee of China Society for Promoting Construction in Former Revolutionary Base Areas.

A few organizations list the protection of members' interests in their organizational goals, but few specify influencing policies as one of their primary organizational objectives. The China Association of Women Entrepreneurs, for example, established a group to help its members protect their rights. However, this group did not make visible achievements, and the association was not involved in policymaking. The China Medical Women's Association (CMWA), for another example, has included an article in its constitution stating that endorsement of medical women's legal interests is one of its tasks. Yet, the Law on Practicing Doctors, promulgated in 1998, does not include any wording regarding medical women, although the CMWA was set up in 1995. Similar promises of the China Women Procurators Association and the China Women Judges Association remain on paper. Although both the China Association of Women Entrepreneurs and the China Women's Chamber of Commerce provide services, such as facilitating marketing, investment, and financing, to their members, they generally avoid policy issues. In addition, a few organizations conducted surveys on their members and published survey reports, including the China Association of Women Entrepreneurs, the CMWA, the China Women Procurators Association, the China Women's Association for Science and Technology, and the China Women

Tourism Committee. Unfortunately, they never sought to influence relevant policies based on these surveys. In fact, some organizations in this category enjoy political advantages in the regime. For example, there are some NPC representatives and CPPCC members in the China Association of Women Entrepreneurs.²¹ However, they have no records of submitting policy proposals for the association. Seemingly influential members of the China Women Procurators Association, the China Women Judges Association, and the China Association of Mayors' Division of Women Mayors also surprisingly remain silent in the policy arena. In this group of women's organizations, only the Association of Women Lawyers under the All China Lawyers Association took a few explicit policy actions. It held one forum and one symposium to discuss legal issues and submitted proposals for enacting the Civil Code in 2019.²² In 2020, its president submitted a proposal regarding school bullying to the NPC.²³ Because these occurred recently, whether this association will break the silence of the whole category needs further observation.

2.2.3 Research Institutions

Regarding research institutions, official think tanks have far more policy influence than women's studies centers in universities. As a subordinate unit of the ACWF, the WSIC has taken on many of the ACWF's research projects related to public policies. It was involved in almost all legislation in which the ACWF participated. Many proposals the ACWF submitted to the NPC and the CPPCC were based on research of the WSIC. In so doing, the WSIC exerted real influence on policies by adding their own views to those policy proposals. For example, the NWCCW and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) designated the WSIC a project to research the adjustment of objectives and indices in the 2001-2010 Outline for the Development of Chinese

²¹ Li Dang, the association's president, is just a member of the Standing Committee of the CPPCC.

²² See online news of the association at <http://www.acla.org.cn/article/page/detailById/25073?from=timeline&isappinstalled=0> and http://www.celg.cn/news_detail_7474.html, accessed Jan. 4, 2020.

²³ See a news report at <https://m.mp.oeeee.com/a/BAAFRD000020200525325469.html>, accessed Mar. 20, 2021.

Women, which provided the WSIC an opportunity to influence national agenda of women development. More importantly, the WSIC sometimes initiates its own research projects, searches for funding, and advocates for policies based on these projects.²⁴ It produces several internal publications, such as Internal Reference of Women's Studies and Study Information Brief, through which it submits research reports to the central leadership. In 2018, a few reports of the adjustment of family planning policy and women's employment received attention and comments from Party-state leaders.²⁵ The WSIC is active in articulating the interests of women. Since its founding in 1990, it has conducted nationwide surveys of women's social status every ten years. Many policy proposals originated from the results of these surveys. The WSIC has also built connections with various organizations and individuals engaging in women-related issues, including grassroots women's organizations and activists, which is basically achieved through the Chinese Women's Research Society.²⁶ Some scholars of the WSIC are well-recognized experts in China, such as Tan Lin, Liu Bohong, Du Jie, and Ding Juan. They frequently attend various policy meetings and workshops held by the ACWF, government agencies, or other authorities. In so doing, they can influence policymaking and transfer the opinions of bottom-up organizations and activists to policymakers.

The Women/Gender Studies Center of the CASS sets a research agenda focusing on real-life problems of women and provides suggestions for public policies related to women. It researched gender discrimination in labor markets, migrant women workers, domestic violence, and raising seniors in rural families. Another research on "the legislation for the retirement of male and female civil servants at the same age" was used by NPC representatives and CPPCC members

²⁴ The author's interview with Ding Juan, a senior researcher of the WSIC, on Sep. 20, 2009, in Beijing.

²⁵ 2018 Annual Report of the Chinese Women's Research Society, available at <http://www.cwrs.ac.cn/index.php?m=content&c=index&a=show&catid=99&id=18>, accessed Jan. 6, 2020.

²⁶ The author's interview with Ding Juan, a senior researcher of the WSIC, on Sep. 20, 2009, in Beijing.

to submit proposals and received comments from major leaders of the State Council. The ACWF sometimes delegates research projects to the Women/Gender Studies Center of the CASS, which provides another means to influence policies.²⁷ Based on this cooperation, it joined the ACWF's efforts to enact the Anti-domestic Violence Law.

The Center for Gender and Law Studies under the Law Institute of the CASS often cooperates with the Women/Gender Studies Center of the CASS to conduct research projects. However, it is a relatively autonomous research institution within the CASS and maintains close relationships with grassroots organizations, especially the Anti-domestic Violence Network of the China Law Society (ADVN). From 2006 to 2007, the center reviewed major Chinese laws from the gender perspective and submitted reports to the NPC. The center's jurists were invited to participate in drafting many pieces of legislation, including the Marriage Law, the Women's Law, the Property Law, the Employment Promotion Law, the Law of Population and Family Planning, the Tort Law, and Regulations Concerning the Labor Protection of Female Workers.²⁸ Allied with other organizations, it submitted many legislative proposals concerning domestic violence and sexual harassment to the NPC and the CPPCC. It also cooperates with the ACWF. In addition to advocating for the Anti-domestic Violence Law, it contributed to drafting the shadow report of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the National Human Rights Action Plan of China (2012-2015), both of which were the ACWF's projects.²⁹ In 2019, it conducted a joint project with the ACWF to push for establishing a system preventing sexual harassment in universities.

Women's studies centers in universities usually engage in teaching and research. They

²⁷ The author's interview with Chen Mingxia, deputy director of the Women/Gender Studies Center of the CASS, on Oct. 13, 2009, in Beijing.

²⁸ The author's interview with Chen Mingxia, then director of the Center for Gender and Law Studies under the Law Institute of the CASS, on Oct. 13, 2009, in Beijing.

²⁹ See the center's self-introduction at <https://www.iolaw.org.cn/showNews.aspx?id=66543>, accessed Jan. 7, 2020.

develop curricula and textbooks and train faculty members and students. Much of their research focuses on theoretical inquiries rather than practical issues. Even if some empirical questions are addressed, the outcomes are generally not policy proposals and can hardly be sent to policymakers. As Zhang (2010, 28) observes, outcomes of gender analysis in Chinese universities have little influence on public policies apart from being published in academic journals and discussed at conferences. Some centers moved off campuses to participate in charity activities or media shows, but these usually did not have policy implications. The Chinese Women's Research Society has set up a nominal entity called Bases for Women's/Gender Studies and Training,³⁰ which includes quite some women's studies centers in universities and has occasionally conducted research through this mechanism. Although these centers might have some opportunities to express their views of public policies in this way, they never used the mechanism to initiate policy proposals.

Among women's studies centers in Beijing's universities, the Women's Studies Center of Peking University and the Media and Gender Institute of Communication University of China are the most thriving. However, no records show they participated in the policy process or submitted any policy proposals to relevant authorities. This policy isolation is also found in associations of scholars in women's studies. The Network for Women's and Gender Studies (NWGS) is the first national organization composed of teachers, scholars, and research centers in women's/gender studies. It has been devoted to curriculum development, training teachers and students, awarding, and other academic activities while avoiding political and policy issues. For instance, it announced its support for Deng Yujiao³¹, a woman involved in a politically controversial case, at one time,

³⁰ According to the self-introduction of the Chinese Women's Research Society, it has recognized 32 such bases since 2006. These bases comprise women's studies institutions in the CASS, the Party School of the Central Committee of the CCP, and universities. Not all women's studies centers in universities are within this mechanism, and a few official think tanks in this mechanism do have policy functions.

³¹ Deng Yujiao is a woman involved in a criminal case in May 2009. She killed one local official in her workplace. The official was accused of harassing and probably attempting to rape Deng. Deng received widespread sympathy throughout the country, including from many women's organizations. Because the case involved government officials and possible wrongdoings within

but eventually, it withdrew the announcement from its website because the NWGS leaders thought they should have confined the organization to academic issues³². Since its founding in 2006, it has not taken any policy-related actions.

The Women's Studies Center of the Party School of the Central Committee of the CCP was a somewhat exceptional research institution. Led by Li Huiying, it launched two projects to push for policy changes in addition to developing curricula and training officials: One was to advocate for paternity leave for male workers; the other was to cooperate with the NPFPC to protect rural women's rights in land distribution by revising village regulations. Eventually, the former project failed, while the latter project succeeded. Revising village regulations was included in the National Outline of the 12th Five-year Plan for Population Development. The ACWF, the MOA, and the MOCA jointly implemented the policy in many provinces to protect rural women's land rights.³³ This center was a special case because it straddled the groups of official think tanks and university study centers. Its two-fold nature might derive from the dual missions of education and the think tank of the Party School of the Central Committee of the CCP. Unfortunately, its evolution has been disrupted since the Party School of the Central Committee of the CCP dissolved the center in 2017.³⁴

2.2.4 Grassroots Women's Organizations

Howell (2003, 2004) and Du (2004) argue that there is variation in the capacity to influence public policies among different women's organizations. For example, the influence of grassroots organizations cannot compare with that of the ACWF. This argument may be valid if the only aspect considered is the effectiveness of policy influence. However, regarding the other two levels

the local judicial system and triggered broad public participation, it went beyond a criminal case and was politicized.

³² It is according to the author's interview with a board member of the NWGS on Sep. 9, 2009, in Beijing.

³³ See Li Huiying's statement in an online report, available at <http://paper.cnwomen.com.cn/content/2015-05/26/016881.html>, accessed Jan. 7, 2020.

³⁴ According to an online report at http://www.cssn.cn/dzyx/dzyx_ggl/201706/t20170630_3565732.shtml?COLLCC=1424121155&, accessed Jan. 7, 2020.

of policy influence—willingness and actions, formal grassroots organizations are no less active than mass organizations in influencing policies. Furthermore, regarding effectiveness, formal grassroots organizations can exert moderate influence rather than be entirely powerless. These are evident from the activities of some prominent grassroots women’s organizations in Beijing.

2.2.4.1 Formal Grassroots Organizations

Based on the services it provided to women, including phone consultation, face-to-face psychological counseling, and family conflict resolution, the Maple Center conducted a great deal of research on urgent issues concerning women, such as sexual harassment, gender discrimination in labor markets, and domestic violence or other problems within families. It has since developed this research into policy proposals and submitted them to the ACWF, the NPC, and the CPPCC. In 2009, it submitted a proposal to the NPC calling for enacting a law preventing sexual harassment in workplaces and explicitly supported Deng Yujiao. From 2011 to 2014, it submitted proposals to the CPPCC advocating for strengthening family education for migrant children, supporting loss-of-single-child families, and preventing sexual offenses against young female minors. The Maple Center contributed to the inclusion of anti-domestic violence in the Marriage Law and the Women’s Law and joined the ACWF’s dedication to enacting the Anti-domestic Violence Law (Wu, 2021). The center also created and implemented “the program of community intervention in domestic issues” in Tianjin. This program was so successful that the Tianjin government adopted it as a solution to stabilize communities and popularized it in the entire city. Recognizing the merits of the program, the ACWF is integrating the model into its project of Women’s Home and spreading the model across the country. As Wang Xingjuan gradually quit the Maple Center with advancing age, Lu Xiaofei, retired chief editor of China Women’s News, and Ding Juan, a former expert in the WSIC, were invited to be board chairwoman and director of the center, respectively. Benefiting from this strengthened relationship with the official system, the Maple Center registered

Beijing Colorful Maple Psychological Counseling Center with the Beijing Bureau of Civil Affairs in 2016. The same team manages both organizations. The Maple Center was a secondary organization affiliated with the Chinese Academy of Management Science (1988-1996) and then registered as a commercial institution (1996-2016). The registration made the Maple Center eventually win official nonprofit status.

The Center for Women's Law Studies and Legal Services of Peking University was devoted to providing legal aid to poor women in public interest litigations. When it dealt with cases in various locations, it often allied with local branches of the ACWF (Lee and Regan, 2009). From these lawsuits, it found issues of women's rights and took action to influence relevant policies (Wu 2021, 320-321). According to information from its former website³⁵, up to March 1998 (less than three years after its founding), the center had submitted thirteen proposals to the NPC or the CPPCC regarding women's labor rights, marriage/family rights, personal rights, domestic violence, legal aid, and the development of NGOs. It tried to propose changes to such legislation as the Marriage Law, the Women's Law, the Property Law, the Employment Promotion Law, and the Law on Employment Contracts. In these policy efforts, it sometimes cooperated with the ACWF to achieve its goals, and government institutions also invited it to attend some legislative workshop conferences (Wu 2021, 325-326). For example, it successfully collaborated with the ACWF to include rural women's rights in the Property Law (Lee and Regan 2009, 562). A significant case was that the center successfully lobbied the MOE to repeal the regulations on the childbearing right of female graduate students in 2005. According to an author interview with one of the major leaders of the center in 2009, Peking University had shown dissatisfaction with the center's practice, especially its involvement in politically sensitive litigations. In March 2010, Peking

³⁵ <http://www.woman-legalaid.org.cn/detail.asp?id=165>, accessed Aug. 21, 2009.

University announced the dissolution of four affiliated institutions, including the center. Guo Jianmei, the center's principal founder, responded by registering Beijing Qianqian Law Firm in September 2009 and another commercially registered institution called Beijing Zhongze Women's Legal Counseling and Service Center (Zhongze) in April 2010. Zhongze still engaged in influencing policies. In 2013, it submitted six proposals to the NPC or the CPPCC through acquaintances. It supported the ACWF's agenda of enacting the Anti-domestic Violence Law (Qiaoan 2022, 116) and revising the Criminal Law, including abolishing "the crime of whoring with underage girls." (Chapter Six will discuss this in detail.) In addition, Zhongze responded to public opinion solicitation for the Special Rules on the Labor Protection of Female Employees and advocated for enforcing the implementation of the Property Law and Organic Law of the Villagers' Committees. It was also an active advocate for the retirement of males and females of the same age. In 2012, Zhongze applied information disclosure to the MOE for gender discrimination in college admission and directly mailed a suggestion letter to the ministry, a rare action in the history of this organization and most other organizations in the women's field. Like its predecessor, Zhongze continued to represent clients in sensitive cases involving rural women's land rights, domestic violence, and sexual assault. It also continued to accept funding from foreign sources. After the "709 Crackdown," the living space for many grassroots social organizations undertaking rights protection was severely compressed. In January 2016, Zhongze was forced to shut down (Qiaoan 2022, 120-121). However, Beijing Qianqian Law Firm was not impacted, and no employees in these two institutions were arrested. In the next few years, the law firm performed all the functions of Zhongze. It held quite a few symposiums to discuss protecting women's and minors' rights. It actively responded to public opinion solicitation for enacting the Civil Code and the revisions of the Law on the Contracting of Rural Land, the Law on the Protection of Minors,

and the Law on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency. In addition, it lobbied the Supreme People's Court to enact a judicial interpretation of the Anti-domestic Violence Law and the Ministry of Public Security (MOPS) to enact departmental rules to handle domestic violence cases. Furthermore, it deals with the same types of legal cases as before. In 2014, Zhongze organized a voluntary lawyers' network named "Guardian Angel" to deal with cases involving sexual offenses against minors. Beijing Qianqian Law Firm continues coordinating the network to accept cases and regularly holds relevant training workshops and symposiums. After studying those cases, lawyers in the network constantly bring forward policy proposals. In 2019, Guo Jianmei won the Right Livelihood Award, a prominent international award for change-makers in environmental protection, sustainable development, human rights, health, education, and peace.

In 2011, Li Ying, former vice director of the Center for Women's Law Studies and Legal Services of Peking University and Zhongze, left Zhongze and started Beijing Yuanzhong Gender Development Center (Yuanzhong). Like Zhongze, Yuanzhong provides legal counseling and legal aid to victims of domestic violence, sexual harassment/assault. It has also organized a voluntary lawyers' network of more than 200 lawyers in 20 provinces to provide legal services.³⁶ These lawyers dealt with many cases involving violence against women and children, some of which caused widespread attention. For example, from 2018 to 2019, Li Ying acted as the attorney for the victim of Liu Meng's offense of sexual harassment and eventually won the case. The case drew public attention because Liu was a well-known leader of an NGO engaged in Social Work in Chengdu City. The case became the first case citing sexual harassment as the cause of action in China. In addition to legal services, Yuanzhong provides psychological, social work, and economic support to victims and has set up a hotline since its founding. Yuanzhong is active in participating

³⁶ See its introduction on the website of the China Development Brief, available at <http://www.chinadevelopmentbrief.org.cn/org3021>, accessed Jan. 14, 2020.

in the enactment or revision of gender-related policies. It submitted proposals for enacting the Anti-domestic Violence Law multiple times. In 2015, it joined another eight organizations to send a suggestion letter to the NPC regarding the Amendment (IX) to the Criminal Law. Yuanzhong also responded to public opinion solicitations for enacting the Civil Code and revising the Law on the Protection of Minors and the Law on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency. In 2019, it held a symposium to discuss the feasibility and necessity of enacting Detailed Rules for the Implementation of the Anti-domestic Violence Law at the national level. Like some other organizations, Yuanzhong conducted policy-related research. In 2017, it issued the first monitoring report of the implementation of the Anti-domestic Violence Law with three other organizations. In 2018, it issued a research report on legislation and judicial cases to prevent and deal with sexual harassment in workplaces. Compared with the Center for Women's Law Studies and Legal Services of Peking University and its two successors, Yuanzhong is more successful in cooperation with local governments. In 2012, it pushed Xinle City in Hebei Province to create a committee promoting equal employment, the first official institution in China. From 2014 to 2015, cooperating with local governments and women's federations, Yuanzhong implemented anti-domestic violence programs in Changsha, Xiangtan, and Changde in Hunan Province. Those programs made various institutional innovations that provided theoretical support and empirical experience for enacting the Anti-domestic Violence Law.³⁷ In 2015, it successfully registered with the Dongcheng District Bureau of Civil Affairs using the official name of Beijing Dongcheng Yuanzhong Family and Community Development Service Center. Li Ying has become a board member of the China Association for Marriage and Family Law, a top-town organization under the China Law Society.

³⁷ Ibid.

The ADVN was another grassroots women's organization that made great efforts to advocate for various measures to protect women from domestic violence and sexual harassment. Possessing more than a hundred individual members and more than 70 institutional members, the ADVN was once the most influential organization engaged in anti-domestic violence. In 2011, the ADVN discontinued its official relationship with the China Law Society and commercially registered Beijing Fanbao Cultural Development Co., Ltd (Fanbao). In May 2014, Fanbao dissolved itself. Five months later, Feng Yuan, former executive director of Fanbao, established Beijing Equality Women's Rights Institute (Equality) to carry on the unfinished mission of the ADVN and Fanbao³⁸. The next section will introduce the ADVN, Fanbao, and Equality in more detail.

The Beijing Cultural Development Center for Rural Women (BCDC), especially its affiliated institution called the Migrant Women's Club, also actively sought to influence public policies. The BCDC conducted some surveys on migrant women and children. It advocated for household registration system reform and submitted proposals in revisions of the Labor Law, the Law on Employment Contracts, and the Work-related Injury Insurance Regulations. It held symposiums on the interests of migrant women and invited government officials to attend (Zhou 2016, 157). The center acted persistently to submit proposals for protecting domestic workers to multiple official institutions at both the Beijing municipal and national levels (Hsu 2012, 3518). In 2006, it successfully lobbied the Beijing Administration for Industry and Commerce to accept their suggestions for drawing a sample contract for domestic workers and their employers³⁹. In 2010, the state council issued Guiding Opinions on Developing Home Services, in which multiple proposals of the BCDC were adopted, including tax credits for domestic service enterprises, social

³⁸ It is stated in Equality's self-introduction at <http://www.equality-beijing.org/about.aspx?id=2>, accessed Jan. 12, 2020.

³⁹ The author's interview with Han Huimin, director of the Migrant Women' Club, on Aug. 21, 2009, in Beijing.

security subsidies for domestic workers, and the protection of their legal rights. However, as Xie Lihua, founder of the BCDC, gradually quit the organization with advancing age, the BCDC has increasingly focused more on providing services instead of influencing policies. The BCDC started Guangdong Rural Women Development Foundation and affiliated Migrant Women's Club in Guangdong Province in 2013. This organization has been devoted to providing services since the beginning and has no record of influencing policies. The last policy-related action of the Migrant Women's Club under the BCDC was to issue a survey report of the first generation of migrant women in 2016.⁴⁰ Since then, it has become a fellowship club for migrant women. Han Huimin, former director of the Migrant Women' Club, also left the institution. The BCDC was replaced by Beijing Yichuang Rural Women Public Interest Business Development Center in 2017, registered with the Beijing Bureau of Civil Affairs. This organization concentrates on building rural communities to serve rural women and children. It has not taken policy actions since its founding. The changing path of the BCDC shows that organizational priorities may not be constant, and a formal organization could avoid policy issues.

2.2.4.2 Informal Grassroots Organizations

However, there is variation in the capacity to influence public policies within grassroots organizations. Those informal organizations, including cyber-groups, lack formal constitutions and working plans. Most of them maintain loose organizational structures, and some have no structures at all. As a result, they cannot influence public policies effectively through concrete actions. Aware of this disadvantage, many of them usually stay away from the policy arena, although some are willing to influence policies to some extent.

The change in Gender and Development in China (GAD) is a good example. It had

⁴⁰ See online news at http://news.china.com.cn/txt/2016-04/10/content_38213006.htm, accessed Jan. 12, 2020.

maintained a loose network of members who had never registered after eight years since its founding. The center of this network was a coordinating group of member institutions elected by other members. However, these members were not bound by the decisions of the coordinating group. Although some member institutions seemed influential, they were so fluid and heterogeneous that it was unlikely to unite them to influence public policies. In 2005, the GAD attempted to launch several policy-related projects but failed eventually, which showed united actions to influence policies were a bottleneck for the GAD.⁴¹ Up to 2009, the most visible achievement of the GAD had been its publication of three Blue Books on Women's Development in China. In 2009, Lü Pin, a former journalist and departmental director of China Women's News, became one of the GAD's coordinators and started reorganizing. Since its annual meeting held in May 2009, the GAD clarified its organizational objectives and attempted to reorganize its members by requiring them to register. The authority of the center of the network was also strengthened to some extent. After the reorganization, the GAD united with the Media Monitor for Women Network, which Lü Pin also coordinated. In the next few years, the GAD took part in Feminist Voices, a series of new media platforms created by Lü Pin, and some of their activities. It had become increasingly interested in policy issues. In 2010, it conducted research calling for the inclusion of gender equality in national poverty alleviation plans. In 2011, it organized a series of activities evaluating the possible destructive effects of the judicial interpretation of the Marriage Law on women. In June 2013, it disseminated a propositional letter to the MOE in response to frequently occurring sexual offenses against minors in elementary schools. In the letter, it advocated for institutional measures to educate and protect students and to regulate teachers. In the same year, it endorsed thirty female lawyers' action of sending a letter to the NPC, the MOH,

⁴¹ The author's interview with Lü Pin, then coordinator of the GAD, on Sep. 14, 2009, in Beijing.

and the ACWF regarding the damage to women's uteruses in the implementation of family planning policy. Other organizations and activists sometimes published messages of policy actions, including signature campaigns, on the GAD's website, and the GAD occasionally participated in signature campaigns. These policy-related actions would not have occurred if the GAD had not adopted the formalization reforms. Unfortunately, the GAD ceased working a year after Lü Pin was stranded in the United States in March 2015, thanks to the Chinese government's crackdown.

There also exist internet websites focusing on women, gender, or marriage and family.⁴² Because they maintain more informal structures and organization than the GAD did, their willingness to influence policies is lower, not to mention actions or effectiveness. Seven of the nine websites studied in this research do not include information on influencing policies, although some websites may post existing laws, regulations, or other policies to inform people. Two of them, run by lawyers, have a little information about the policy-related activities of their founding lawyers. However, participating in these activities was under the names of individual lawyers rather than those websites. In general, none of these websites serves as a platform for influencing policies.

2.2.4.3 A New Force in the Chinese Women's Movement: the Media Monitor for Women Network, Feminist Voices, and the Young Feminist Activism Group

Founded in 1996, the Media Monitor for Women Network was the only Chinese organization monitoring media coverage of women-related issues and promoting gender equality in media reports. Nominally affiliated with the Beijing Women Journalists' Association, the organization also maintained a loose structure for a long time.⁴³ In its relatively long history, the

⁴² For example, <http://www.alleyshot.com>, <http://www.ladyscn.com>, <http://www.feminist.cn>, <http://www.edujt.com>, <http://www.hunyin.org.cn>, and <http://www.lihunnet.cn>.

⁴³ According to the author's interview with Lü Pin, who was also the coordinator of the Media Monitor for Women Network, on Sep. 14, 2009, in Beijing, the network maintained a loose relationship with the Beijing Women Journalists' Association. The association itself is not a well-structured organization. The Media Monitor for Women Network had no constitution, full-time staff, and strategic plan.

Media Monitor for Women Network took only several actions to influence policies. In 2008, it submitted a suggestion letter to relevant authorities calling for the awareness of women's demands and rights in combatting the Wenchuan earthquake. From 2000 to 2010, it took part in the WSIC's drafting of the Purple Books evaluating China's implementation of the PFA three times.⁴⁴ In 2012, it conducted surveys of domestic workers' expressions of their opinions in three cities. However, none of these actions generated policy outcomes.

As a co-founder of the organization, Lü Pin acted as its coordinator from 2009. Unlike the reorganization strategy she applied in the GAD that incorporated a variety of institutional and individual members, Lü Pin pushed the Media Monitor for Women Network onto another track. In addition to monitoring the media, the network started to create alternative new media outlets for women. At first, it edited an electronic newspaper called Women's Voices, circulated within a limited circle. Shortly, Lü established a website at www.genderwatch.cn for the network and Women's Voices. After microblogging became popular, she created a microblogging platform on Sina Weibo in 2010 and renamed it Feminist Voices the next year. Later, Feminist Voices launched a Weixin public account under the same name. The free, open, and avant-garde style of these new media outlets soon attracted many young feminist activists, making Feminist Voices the most influential media platform for feminist activism in China (Leggett 2017, 2253-2254; Fincher 2018, 44-45). Consequently, the Media Monitor for Women Network had been overshadowed by Feminist Voices, although it eventually ceased working with the latter.

Feminist Voices were not just media outlets. In addition to disseminating information and analyses, it also served as a forum on which activists communicated with each other. Furthermore, it organized many offline activities, such as symposiums, workshops, and training sessions. In so

⁴⁴ Ibid.

doing, it had soon become a hub of a network composed of more aggressive individuals and organizations, especially a group of young activists who called themselves the Young Feminist Activism Group (YFAG or *qingnian nüquan xingdongpai* in Chinese) (Wang 2018b, 64). The YFAG is not a single formal organization. Instead, it involves multiple activists and formal organizations they had established or joined. Therefore, it can coordinate policy actions as formal organizations do. Although Feminist Voices did not act as the headquarter of the YFAG, it sustained the latter by serving as an information distribution center, an elucidator of notions, and a regular participant.⁴⁵ Generally speaking, the Media Monitor for Women Network, Feminist Voices, and the YFAG fall into the category of formal grassroots organizations. Since 2012, this new force⁴⁶ in the Chinese women's movement launched a series of policy activities and made visible achievements. In contrast to other bottom-up women's organizations introduced before, these organizations adopted more aggressive means to influence policies. Some scholars have similar judgments on these young activists. Wei (2015, 286-287) points out that mutual penetration and support amongst these organizations and networks ensure the success of street-based contentious actions and advocacies. In addition to disclosing the underlying mobilization structure of social organizations behind these seemingly independent volunteers, Bräuer (2016) accentuates that their street-based activism is distinct from the previously existing approach based on expert experience and knowledge. Wang (2015, 479) also notices that young feminists in China have adopted strategies different from their predecessors in promoting gender equality. Li and Li (2017, 57-62) compare these two strategies in more detail and further find that young feminists prefer

⁴⁵ See Lü Pin's description of this relationship in an interview with Lüqiu Luwei, a former renowned reporter for Phoenix Television, in November 2012. The text is available at https://lady.163.com/12/1130/12/8HICBA97002626I3_all.html, accessed Jan. 17, 2020.

⁴⁶ As introduced before, the GAD took part in this new force after 2009. In addition, the GAD took similar means to influence policies. However, because the GAD incorporated a variety of institutional and individual members, Lü Pin refrained from using its name in many actions.

market-oriented media to official media. Liao (2020) labels this new force as “outer-system” feminists to distinguish them from state feminism and “NGO feminism” as they break ties with the state. Wang (2018a, 2018b) claims their “outer-system” political stance warrants a paradigm shift and generation change. This research classifies them into another policy influence mode, which will be introduced and defined in detail in the next chapter.

In February 2012, Zheng Churan, Li Tingting, and fellow activists conducted a performance art of “occupying men’s room” in Guangzhou to advocate for increasing female toilets in public restrooms. Other activists soon copied this novel activity in multiple cities and attracted public attention. These activists also contacted NPC representatives, CPPCC members, and local governments to request their endorsement. For example, in August 2012, Li Tingting, Zheng Churan, and Ou Jiayang submitted 16 suggestion letters to the former Guangzhou Municipal Management Committee face to face. For another example, Li Tingting united more than one hundred college students and sent hundreds of letters to NPC representatives in 2014. A few of them submitted relevant policy proposals for these activists. These efforts made some achievements. The governments of Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Kunming, and a few other cities introduced new policies to increase female toilets. In 2013, the MOH intended to do the same in drafting Sanitary Standard for Public Restrooms. In 2016, the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development issued Standard for Design of Urban Public Toilets, an optional article of which states the ratio of female toilets and male toilets should be 3:2 in ordinary public restrooms and 2:1 in those with a large flow of people. In 2022, the revised Women’s Law includes an article stating that women’s unique needs should be considered when governments design and construct public facilities such as toilets and infant rooms.

In July 2012, the problem of gender discrimination in university enrollment drew public

attention. Some universities/majors set up fixed male-to-female enrollment ratios and corresponding different cut-off admission scores in favor of male students. As a response, Lü Pin applied for information disclosure to the MOE. Dissatisfied with the MOE's ambiguous reply, she launched a campaign of "shaving heads" as a protest. This unusual form of complaint further drew public attention through the coverage of various media outlets. In addition, followers collectively sent a letter to the MOE calling for a solution. From 2013 to 2015, Feminist Voices conducted three surveys on the issue and published results. Facing intense public pressure, the MOE revised the Regulations on the Admission of General Institutions of Higher Education in 2013, which forbids gender-based discrimination in college admission. The MOE accentuated this rule in multiple policy documents in the following years. In 2022, the revised Women's Law further confirmed the rule.

The YFAG also took action to combat gender-based discrimination in employment. In November 2012, a group of activists protested in front of the Human Resources and Social Security Department of Hubei Province for unnecessary gynecological examination in the enrollment of civil servants. In the next month, Zheng Churan mobilized female college students in eight cities to impeach 267 enterprises that had published employment advertisements involving gender-based discrimination via www.zhaopin.com to local bureaus of human resources and social security and local bureaus of industry and commerce administration. They especially impeached www.zhaopin.com itself. Dozens of these local bureaus responded, and www.zhaopin.com erased all these advertisements. In 2013, Zheng Churan sent a letter to the head of the Human Resources and Social Security Department of Guangdong Province and invited him to visit career fairs to discover gender-based discrimination. The head himself did not respond, but the department replied and promised to strengthen inspections. In 2014, activists of the YFAG launched a

signature campaign. They sent open letters to the Supreme People's Court, the ACWF, and Xihu District Court of Hangzhou to support Huang Rong, who had sued a local school for declining her job application because of her gender. Huang eventually won the case. It was the first case citing gender-based discrimination in employment as the cause of action in China. In the same year, a few activists of the YFAG launched a microblogging platform on Sina Weibo called "supervision brigade for gender-based employment discrimination." They solicited and collected employment advertisements involving gender-based discrimination and reported those employers to local authorities such as bureaus of human resources and social security, bureaus of education, and the ACWF branches. Sometimes these activists received responses from the authorities indicating they had taken action against those employers.⁴⁷ These efforts coincided with the ACWF's agenda. When it drafted new revisions of the Women's Law, five specific behaviors of employers involving gender-based discrimination in employment were listed and prohibited. These remain in the final version adopted in 2022.

In February 2012, Li Tingting, Xiao Meili, and Xiong Jing initiated another performance art of "wounded brides" to raise public awareness of domestic violence. Activists in other cities also followed suit. Some of them applied information disclosure to local public security bureaus for their management of relevant cases. In November, Feminist Voices and the YFAG launched an online signature campaign to advocate for public participation in enacting the Anti-domestic Violence Law. To attract more participants, more than a dozen activists, including Lü Pin, posted their topless photos online, an unprecedented adventure in China (Han and Lee, 2019). In January 2013, they collected over 12 thousand signatures for an open letter and sent it to the NPC. This campaign became China's most extensive public mobilization concerning protecting women's

⁴⁷ See an online report of "supervision brigade for gender-based employment discrimination" at <https://www.163.com/dy/article/G4OHE37I0534MZG7.html>, accessed Mar. 11, 2021.

rights by then. In addition, Feminist Voices and the YFAG supported Kim Lee, the victim of Li Yang's domestic violence case, which will be introduced in Chapter Six, and Li Yan, who had killed her abusive husband and was finally sentenced to death with a two-year reprieve. These efforts contributed to enacting the Anti-domestic Violence Law (Leggett, 2017).

Feminist Voices and the YFAG consistently tried to prevent sexual harassment/assault. In June and September 2012, they respectively launched campaigns to criticize/monitor Shanghai Metro Company and Guangzhou Metro Company for taking measures to prevent and handle sexual harassment. In 2013, Xiao Meili made a long-distance pedestrian journey from Beijing to Guangzhou to advocate for anti-sexual assault. In addition to holding conferences, meeting media reporters, and collecting signatures, she sent out 165 suggestion letters or applications for information disclosure to local education bureaus on her trip, calling for specific measures to prevent campus sexual assault. Activities of these activists heralded China's #MeToo movement.

In addition to tackling general feminist issues, Feminist Voices and the YFAG stood for some specific underprivileged groups. In 2014, Feminist Voices lobbied NPC representatives and CPPCC members to repeal the Detention Education System (*shourong jiaoyu zhidu*), which started in 1991. In this system, persons engaging in prostitution and whoring could be detained and forced to work by the police in detention centers for six months to two years without due process. To save victims of this system, mainly sex workers, Zhao Sile applied for information disclosure to the state council, the MOPS, and all departments of public security at the provincial level in April 2014. Dissatisfied with some replies, she applied for administrative reconsideration (*xingzheng fuyi*) to 13 provincial governments in June. In September, she filed the first lawsuit in China regarding the Detention Education System against Guangdong Provincial Public Security Department but soon lost the case. In February 2015, Feminist Voices mailed 526 letters to female

NPC representatives calling for the abolition of the system. These actions raised public awareness of the issue. A few sympathetic CPPCC members continuously submitted proposals after that. At the end of 2019, the NPC eventually repealed the Detention Education System. Rural women's rights in land distribution were also a concern of Feminist Voices and the YFAG. Quite a few relevant reports appeared in media outlets of Feminist Voices, and the YFAG mobilized a group of rural women to conduct a performance art in front of the provincial government of Zhejiang in 2013.

Aggressive actions of Feminist Voices and the YFAG incurred government repression. In March 2015, some activists sent letters to NPC representatives calling for their endorsement of preventing sexual harassment in public transit and planned to paste posters on buses. On March 7, the police in Guangzhou, Hangzhou, and Beijing detained five activists—Wu Rongrong, Zheng Churan, Li Tingting, Wei Tingting, and Wang Man, who were later dubbed the Feminist Five (Lam 2020, 16, 209; Wu 2021, 330; Qiaoan 2022, 121). They all had organizational backgrounds (Fincher 2018, 15-31). Wu Rongrong started Hangzhou Weizhiming Organization (Weizhiming) in 2014 after she worked for Aizhixing and Yirenping, two organizations in the health field, for a long time. Zheng Churan was a full-time employee of Weizhiming, and the other three were its working partners. Li Tingting served as LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) project manager of Yirenping. Wei Tingting was also a project manager of Beijing Gender Health Education Institute, an LGBTQ organization in the health field, after she worked for a few lesbian organizations.⁴⁸ Wang Man coordinated Global Call to Action Against Poverty China, an alliance of multiple organizations. The detention of the Feminist Five triggered domestic and global resistance and protests and became an international hot event (Wu 2021, 330). In addition to

⁴⁸ According to Hou (2023) and Wu (2021), many lesbian activists entangle with feminists to promote their political agenda.

various civil forces, influential American politicians such as Hillary Clinton, John Kerry, Joe Biden, senior diplomats of the European Union, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Canada all pressured the Chinese government. Eventually, the Feminist Five were freed under conditional release on April 13, 2015 (Wang, 2015; Fincher 2018, 2-3; Wu 2021, 330). However, Weizhiming and Yirenping were forced to shut down the same year. Lü Pin came to the U.S. to attend a conference on March 5. After learning her apartment in Beijing was searched by the police in April, she decided to stay in the U.S. She started the Facebook group named Free Chinese Feminists to campaign for the release of the Feminist Five, which has continued as a venue for Chinese feminist activism. She also jointly registered an American organization named the Chinese Feminism Collective to support feminist activities in China.

After the release of The Feminist Five, Xiong Jing resumed the work of Feminist Voices in a limited political space. The YFAG also curtailed its activities. The state pushed back several highlighted actions. In 2015, Qiu Bai disclosed the content of homophobia in many textbooks. She denounced a publisher and applied information disclosure to the MOE. Receiving no response, Qiu Bai sued the MOE four times. A court accepted the third suit, but she eventually lost the case in 2017 (Parkin 2018, 1257-1260; Chen, 2020). In the same year, Xixi filed a similar lawsuit involving homophobia in a textbook. She also lost the case in 2021. From 2016 to 2019, activists of the YFAG, such as Zhang Leilei and Zhu Xixi, continued to send letters to NPC representatives calling for their endorsement of preventing sexual harassment. As a Beijing BCOME Women's Rights Group member, Zhang Leilei initiated a nationwide performance art of "carrying anti-sexual harassment billboards while traveling" in May 2017. After 17 days, the police forced all participants to stop the practice and required Zhang Leilei and Xiao Meili to move out of Guangzhou. From February to March 2017, Sina Weibo suspended Feminist Voices for 30 days.

The #MeToo movement impacted China in 2018. On January 1, Luo Qianqian, a former student of Beihang University, openly accused Chen Xiaowu, her former adviser at the university, of sexually harassing her and a few other female students. This case started the #MeToo movement in China. Feminist Voices and the YFAG soon joined the mobilization of the movement. Thirty-eight activists initiated a signature campaign to send open letters to universities and the MOE calling for establishing mechanisms to prevent campus sexual harassment. More than ten thousand students and alumni of 94 universities participated in the campaign. In the same month, Chen Xiaowu was stripped of all positions by Beihang University and the MOE. The MOE also indicated its intention to establish such mechanisms. In March 2018, Huang Xueqin, an independent reporter and an ally of Luo Qianqian, released her Survey Report of Sexual Harassment Encountered by Chinese Female Reporters in Hong Kong, which shows that more than 80% of Chinese female reporters are victims of sexual harassment.

However, Feminist Voices was put down again. On March 9, 2018, Sina Weibo and Weixin permanently closed accounts of Feminist Voices simultaneously, which was an apparently coordinated action. Activists' efforts to restore these accounts turned out to be fruitless. Lü Pin deemed the crackdown rooted in conflicts between the state's expectations and the mode these activists chose to transform society. Dissatisfied with the reality, they constantly criticized society and the state. More importantly, feminist activism was hit harder than ordinary feminists because these activists always tried to organize women.⁴⁹

Surprisingly, the #MeToo movement did not lose momentum in China for a few months after the crackdown on Feminist Voices. On the one hand, Lü Pin and individual activists could still participate in the movement after losing their official platforms in China. On the other hand,

⁴⁹ See Lü Pin's online article titled The History of Antifeminism on Microblogging Platforms, available at http://bbs.creaders.net/politics/bbsviewer.php?trd_id=1314929&language=big5, accessed Mar. 9, 2020.

the awakening of feminist consciousness in broader groups, especially victims of sexual harassment, pushed the movement forward (Lin and Yang, 2019). In April, Li Youyou, an alumna of Peking University, accused Shen Yang, a former professor at the university, of sexually assaulting Gao Yan, a former classmate of Li, and making her commit suicide. This case reactivated the #MeToo movement. A few cases in other universities were disclosed in the following months. In May, sexual harassment of drivers from DiDi, the largest ridesharing company in China, became a hot topic. In July, a few celebrities in the nonprofit sector and the media, such as Deng Fei, Lei Chuang, Feng Yongfeng, Liu Meng, Zhang Wen, and Zhu Jun, were accused of sexual harassment or assault. In August, the National Religious Affairs Administration punished Master Xuecheng, China's most famous monk and president of the Buddhist Association of China, after allegations against him were corroborated, including molesting female disciples.

In addition to urging the disposal of individual cases, activists advocated for institutional changes. In July 2018, Zhang Leilei applied to the MOE to disclose information about constructing mechanisms to prevent campus sexual harassment. In September, she sent letters to national top 500 enterprises calling for establishing mechanisms to prevent sexual harassment in workplaces. These efforts did not generate significant outcomes at that time. Nevertheless, the #MeToo movement catalyzed a few policy changes. In August 2018, sexual harassment was included in the draft of the Civil Code and remained in the final version adopted in 2020. In October, the Supreme People's Procuratorate issued the Number One Procuratorial Proposal to the MOE, suggesting improving mechanisms to prevent campus sexual assaults. In November, the MOE issued two departmental rules regulating teachers' behaviors. The next month, the Supreme People's Court confirmed sexual harassment as the cause of civil action in China for the first time. In 2022, the revised Women's Law includes more detailed provisions regarding sexual harassment.

However, the Party-state was suspicious of this movement introduced from Western countries. The inherent mass mobilization of the movement was particularly unacceptable to the authorities. Since August 2018, the state started systematic counterattacks. Various media outlets extensively deleted relevant reports and posts. A few suspects of sexual harassment/assault, including Zhu Jun, an anchor of China Central Television, filed counterclaims. Paid posters and anti-feminists⁵⁰ also drastically stigmatized the movement and activists/victims. For example, when activists supported Liu Jingyao, who claimed Liu Qiangdong, former CEO of the JD Group, raped her in Minnesota in September 2018, they encountered intensive resistance. Since July 2018, activists held #MeToo in China Exhibition in Beijing, Guangzhou, and Chengdu, but the activity was interrupted twice. In October, they had to move the exhibition to New York City. In December, Guangzhou Gender and Sexuality Education Center, an organization established by Wei Tingting in 2016, was forced to close. Since 2019, the Party-state has generally strangled China's #MeToo movement, and most of the YFAG remained silent.

In April 2020, some media outlets reported that Bao Yuming, a former senior executive of a large company, sexually assaulted his adopted daughter for four years, which triggered intensive public criticism.⁵¹ The YFAG grasped this opportunity and took a policy action. A feminist group launched an online signature campaign in May calling for redefining the crime of rape and adding the crime of sexual assault using privileged power in revising the Criminal Law. The group collected 65 thousand signatures and sent the suggestion letter to the NPC. In December, the adopted Amendment (XI) to the Criminal Law includes a new crime of sexual assault by people

⁵⁰ As Han (2018, 743) finds, misogyny has become a state-sanctioned practice in China.

⁵¹ The MOPS and the Supreme People's Procuratorate sent a task force to investigate the case. In September 2020, the task force announced its conclusion. Li Xingxing, Bao Yuming's "adopted daughter," was not a minor when she met Bao because she altered her birth date. The adoption had no legal base or official confirmation, meaning they were partners instead of the guardian and the adopted daughter. There was no evidence of sexual assault. Bao Yuming was deported because he obtained U.S. citizenship in 2006 but failed to report to the Chinese government.

with special responsibilities who have close contact with female minors. However, this action did not revive the #MeToo movement in China. The feminist group's Sina Weibo account was suspended. In the meantime, the YFAG tried to launch an online campaign to condemn police nonfeasance in La Mu's domestic violence case⁵², which had attracted extensive attention. Unfortunately, the authorities soon completely blocked discussions of the case. Since March 2021, paid posters and anti-feminists launched another campaign to stigmatize feminist activists as "foreign hostile forces" after Xiao Meili exposed her conflict with an indoor smoker.⁵³ Many accounts of feminists and their groups were closed by multiple online platforms such as Sina Weibo, Weixin, and Douban, indicating a coordinated action. In September, Zhou Xiaoxuan lost her high-profile case against Zhu Jun. In the same month, Guangzhou police arrested Huang Xueqin for inciting subversion of State power. In November, Peng Shuai, a Chinese tennis star, accused Zhang Gaoli, a former CCP Politburo Standing Committee member and a former vice premier, of sexual assault. Her online post was removed in minutes, and any discussions or indications of the event were strictly prohibited in China. Despite that the case led to great percussions in international society, the Chinese government never investigated it or officially responded. Although some scholars argue that China's #MeToo movement may reemerge under certain conditions (Zhou and Qiu, 2020), the voices of young feminist activists appear to be increasingly weaker.

This section maps out the policy influence of women's organizations in China. As shown in this section, the presence of different policy influences is not only between grassroots women's

⁵² La Mu was a Tibetan woman who suffered from domestic violence for a long time. She reported to the police multiple times, but the police refused to intervene in the case and did not take any action against her ex-husband. In September 2020, her ex-husband burned her using gasoline, and she died several weeks later.

⁵³ See Lü Pin's online article titled Harmless and Depoliticized Feminists Are Defined as "Foreign Hostile Forces" Step by Step, available at <https://www.wainao.me/wainao-reads/feminism-foreign%20forces-08302021>, accessed Sep. 13, 2021. According to another online article by Lü Pin, the police intervened in the event and kept many feminists under constant surveillance after that, which further constrained their space. The article is titled How a Thwarted Feminist Movement Spawned a New Generation of "White Paper Revolutionaries," available at <https://www.wainao.me/wainao-reads/thwarted-feminist-movement-spawned-white-paper-revolutionaries-03072023>, accessed Mar. 13, 2023.

organizations and organizations with official backgrounds but also within these two categories. Mass organizations play a vital role in the policy process, while formal grassroots organizations increasingly seek such a role. Kennedy's (2005) inverted-U-shaped relationship between policy influence and autonomy does not apply to the field of women's organizations. Mass organizations and official think tanks can influence policies effectively because they are close extensions of the state. Autonomous organizations may find some access to the government and exert moderate influence on policies. Those organizations in the middle, such as other top-down organizations and university study centers, have low policy influence. If we draw a curve between policy influence and autonomy in women's organizations, it could be like a U-shaped curve with a shorter right hand. Admittedly, the policy influence of informal grassroots organizations is much lower than that of formal ones. Nevertheless, it is not because they are more autonomous than formal organizations; organizational capacity explains this difference. Overall, both organizational nature—the relationships with the state—and organizational capacity have impacts on the policy influence of organizations.

2.3 Active State Corporatism and Embedded Pluralism: Two Modes of Policy Influence

2.3.1 Organizations with Official Backgrounds: Active State Corporatism and Symbolic State Corporatism

Both mass organizations and other top-down organizations are state corporatist organizations. They all are licensed and created by the state, and the state remains their major source of various resources, including funds, personnel, working places, and other facilities. Each organization is granted a deliberate representational monopoly within its respective field. For example, only the China Women Judges Association is allowed in the court system. Membership in many of these organizations is compulsory. All Chinese women are supposed to be members of the ACWF, and all women judges are supposed to be members of the China Women Judges

Association. These organizations are all hierarchically ordered. Mass organizations have branches at various administrative levels, while other top-down organizations have local counterparts to perform the same functions⁵⁴. The state selects their leaders, and articulating interests has never slipped the state's leash. As far as policymaking is concerned, "the weight of decision-making power lies very heavily on the side of the state." (Unger and Chan 1995, 31)

However, mass organizations and other top-down organizations behave so differently that they may be considered different in nature. What is the reason for their differences in influencing public policies?

Close observation shows the reason lies in their different statuses within state corporatist arrangements. As previously mentioned, the ACWF is the bridge and the conduit between the Party, the government, and the masses of women, and it serves as one of the critical social pillars of the state power. Similar words appear in the constitution of the ACFTU. The CFPA was not a mass organization until it grew into a giant organization and played an essential role in implementing the family planning policy, another basic state policy of China.⁵⁵ Because of the high status the state has bestowed on them, mass organizations are granted *de jure* or *de facto* power of participation in the policymaking process. For example, according to Articles 8, 13, 16, and 17 of the Women's Law, when laws, regulations, and policies related to important issues regarding women's interests are enacted, opinions of the ACWF should be considered. Women and women's organizations have the right to express their opinions and submit their suggestions regarding

⁵⁴ Because the Chinese government forbids social organizations other than mass organizations to establish local branches, these local organizations register with local governments. However, they have close connections with their respective national organizations.

⁵⁵ Since 2006, the CFPA has been incorporated into the mass organizations managed by the State Commission for Public Sector Reform, which prescribes its function, scale, and framework. The Organization Department of the CCP Central Committee and the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security—previously known as the Ministry of Personnel—have also sanctioned the CFPA to enter the jurisdiction of the Law of the People's Republic of China on Public Servants, which means the CFPA leaders and ordinary employees are treated the same as public servants.

protecting women's interests to all levels of government. The ACFTU's power of participation is also guaranteed by Articles 5 and 34 of the Trade Union Law, which state that when governmental institutions enact laws, regulations, development plans, and other policies related to workers' interests, opinions of trade unions should be taken into account. Although no similar article in the Law on Population and Family Planning guarantees the CFPA's power of participation, the association's power is acquired in practice. As mentioned above, major leaders of local CCP and governments concurrently hold many local CFPA chairpersons' posts, making the CFPA powerful in local decision-making.

On the other hand, other top-down women's organizations do not possess such a status, although they maintain a corporatist form. The older organizations among this group were mostly established to demonstrate the CCP's women's work, and the newer organizations were founded in different professions/sections to welcome the FWCW. They all play symbolic roles focusing on fellowship and public communication. Even though some provide services inside or outside organizations or vocally declare protecting the interests of their members, they generally stay away from policy issues and take no concrete actions to represent the interests of their members. They have never been granted the power to participate in the policymaking process. Even government organs within their respective sectors do not regularly invite them into decision-making.

Therefore, if state corporatist organizations are not granted the power to participate in the policymaking process, they will not be motivated to influence policies. They will remain as mere policy-takers who passively accept policies and occasionally facilitate implementing policies on the government's behalf. Their main functions are fellowship activities, public communication, and improving the state's image. They seldom engage in policy-related activities and cannot represent the interests of their assigned constituencies. This kind of state corporatism can be called

“symbolic state corporatism.” In contrast, if state corporatist organizations are granted the power to participate in the policymaking process, they will be motivated to influence public policies. They may play essential roles in the policy arena. This kind of state corporatism is called “active state corporatism” in this research. Although the weight of decision-making power lies heavily on the side of the state in both situations, active state corporatism incorporates more and better opportunities to represent the constituencies’ interests and influence policies than symbolic state corporatism. GONGOS are not created by a monolithic Party-state but by one or more agents and organizations with different interests and statuses. As a result, they have varied relationships (in terms of both closeness and power differentials) with other Party-state actors and organizations (Hsu C.L. 2016, 155).

This classification can also explain different policy influences in research institutions. Official think tanks are guaranteed access to channels into the policy process. For example, the WSIC works closely with the ACWF and can send their opinions to policymakers through the ACWF. The two centers under the CASS have the latter as their channel to policymakers. In addition to ordinary invitations by various policymakers, the CASS possesses a special non-circulating publication called Critical Reports (*yaobao*), which is sent to the General Office of the CCP Central Committee periodically.⁵⁶ Former Women’s Studies Center of Party School of the Central Committee of the CCP also had some access to policymakers. Because of this guaranteed access and their obligations to conduct policy-related research, official think tanks are motivated to influence policies, and sometimes they may be influential. In contrast to them, women’s studies centers in universities have no guaranteed access to policymakers. Furthermore, they do not have the same obligations as official think tanks to conduct policy-related research. Although they

⁵⁶ The author’s interview with Chen Mingxia on Oct. 13, 2009, in Beijing.

conducted such research at one time, their interest in influencing public policies tends to recede over time. According to Chow et al. (2004, 166), women's studies in China engaged in research on practical problems right after the FWCW, but theoretical concerns and discipline building gained special attention after that. Hence women's studies centers in universities can be classified as symbolic state corporatism, while official think tanks in the women's field are part of active state corporatism.

2.3.2 Grassroots Organizations: Embedded Pluralism and Silent Pluralism

As mentioned above, most formal grassroots women's organizations in China seek to influence policies actively and have had some moderate achievements. However, does it mean all these organizations act entirely outside the government, as the civil society/pluralism model argues? Close observation provides an answer in the negative. Ho (2008a, 2008b) puts forward the notion of embedded social activism to describe the environmental movement in China. He realizes that "as long as you don't openly oppose the central state, many things are possible in China" (Ho 2008a, 8). "Environmental activists have gained firm ground through combined tactics of self-imposed censorship, a conscious de-politicization of politics, and a reliance on informal strategies and relations" (Ho 2008a, 11-12). Kennedy (2005, 164) also finds that business associations, including foreign associations (see p. 140), "tend to avoid challenging the government's authority; instead, deference to the state and finding win-win outcomes is the most common strategy to persuade the government to adopt policies consistent with ones' own interests." In her research on the Maple Center, the ADVN, and the Center for Women's Law Studies and Legal Services of Peking University, Keech-Marx (2008, 184) discloses they adopt a non-confrontational style of contention utilizing constructive engagement with the state in order to work for change in a political environment where the authorities are often suspicious of grassroots activism. Using anti-domestic violence as an example, she analyzes how these organizations legitimize their activities

by framing gender issues in ways that resonate with the discourses of the Chinese state (Keech-Marx, 2008). Wu's (2018) research on the Maple Center, the Center for Women's Law Studies and Legal Services of Peking University, and an LGBTQ organization discovers a strategy called "adaptive confrontation." She finds that all three organizations have opted for non-confrontational strategies and seek cooperation with the state. In building relationships with the government, they employ such strategies as figuring out the boundaries and cultivating communication channels.

These studies correspond with observations of many grassroots women's organizations in this research. Instead of isolating themselves from the state, these organizations take on a non-confrontational attitude toward the state and even seek opportunities to cooperate with the state. They deliberately embed themselves in the restricted political environment and complex sociopolitical networks. As Keech-Marx (2008, 183) holds, many activists of grassroots women's organizations have connections to Party-state institutions, making the boundaries between state and non-state entities blurred. This embeddedness is not just passive adaptation to ensure survival but an active manipulation of available resources to achieve organizational goals. More importantly, this embeddedness is not at the price of organizational autonomy. These organizations can still develop and follow their own agendas despite cooperating with the government. As Wesoky (2016, 60) argues, perhaps a more "indigenized" aspect of Chinese feminism is its distinctive non-governmental organizations that are independent of but also collaborate with the Women's Federation and the state. Provided these grassroots organizations are independent of the state, they are pluralist organizations; however, they do not behave like organizations under Western pluralism. This particular mode of policy influence in China can be called "embedded pluralism." Furthermore, the relative degree of embeddedness partially depends on organizational capacity. Lower capacity is associated with lower embeddedness. It means some organizations

with low capacity can hardly adapt to the sociopolitical environment and manipulate resources well enough to influence public policies. Therefore, informal grassroots women's organizations have maintained silence in the policy arena, although they are pluralist organizations. This kind of pluralism is called "silent pluralism" in this research.

Embedded pluralism and silent pluralism are mainstream modes of policy (non)influence in grassroots women's organizations. The YFAG and Feminist Voices became a new force in the Chinese Women's movement. As discussed in the next chapter, they, in fact, fall into the category of another mode of policy influence. Unfortunately, the Party-state smashed the force to a large extent before it became mainstream.

2.3.3 Case Studies

This chapter discovers that active state corporatism and embedded pluralism are significant forms of feminist activism in China. The six cases below will provide more details to further illustrate these two modes of policy influence. The first three are cases of active state corporatism, while the latter three are cases of embedded pluralism.

The ACWF and the Law on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests

After implementing the reform and opening up policy, its negative consequences on women were increasingly visible. China's adoption of the CEDAW in 1980 also increased the visibility and legitimacy of women's issues in China. From the mid-1980s, the ACWF began to lobby major CCP leaders and the NPC to enact a new law to protect women's interests. Because the chairwoman of the ACWF is always one of the vice chairpersons of the standing committee of the NPC, she has the ear of top political leaders. Eventually, the Committee for Internal and Judicial Affairs of the NPC invited the ACWF to be the primary drafter of the law. Preparation for the FWCW further accelerated the legislative process. The Law on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests was adopted in 1992.

However, the drawbacks of the law were exposed in the 1990s when market reforms were furthered, thereby making women's problems more acute. The ACWF's local cadres and some female scholars urged the ACWF and the NPC to revise the law. In 2002, the ACWF participated in a large-scale inspection of the implementation of the Women's Law launched by the NPC and discovered that the problems ascribed to the law were factual, especially its inapplicability in practice. As a result, the ACWF lobbied the NPC to put the revision of the Women's Law on its legislative agenda, and it succeeded eventually. Again, the NPC and the Legislative Affairs Office of the State Council invited the ACWF to draft the revisions.

The ACWF conducted substantive research regarding the urgent problems related to women throughout the country and held numerous workshops and colloquia to listen to opinions from all sides. The revised law was adopted in 2005 and reflected the voices of the masses to a large extent. Most of the ACWF's proposals were included. For example, it is reaffirmed that equality between men and women is a basic state policy of China; the ACWF's power of participation in the policy process is guaranteed; some new issues, such as the protection of women from sexual harassment and domestic violence, the provision of legal aid to poor women, and the protection of economic interests of rural women, have been added into the new law; the amendments also emphasize the responsibilities of the government in protecting women's interests and make the law more applicable in practice (Palmer, 2007). Since adopting the new law, the ACWF made great efforts to push for enacting Implementation Measures of the Women's Law in provinces through its local branches and had succeeded in all 31 province-level administrative regions by 2011. It also participated in each inspection of the implementation of the law organized by the NPC and launched field investigations of its implementation by itself.

In this process, the ACWF found that some articles in the law needed more details. In

addition, new issues and concerns emerged in society, calling for further action by the ACWF. Some measures the ACWF had taken recently also needed to be legally institutionalized. In 2020, the ACWF proposed that the NPC revise the Women's Law again. The following year, the NPC put it on its legislative agenda and designated the ACWF to draft revisions. The final version was adopted by the NPC in October 2022 and became effective in 2023. In addition to those new stipulations introduced before, the law has more detailed provisions regarding rural women's land rights, community properties of spouses, and sexual harassment. It is worth mentioning that two articles in the law require schools and employers to establish specific mechanisms to prevent and deal with sexual harassment, which can be seen as an institutional achievement of the #MeToo movement. Some actions the ACWF has taken, such as the Policy Evaluation Mechanisms for Gender Equality and regular gender-based surveys and statistics, are confirmed in the law. The practical functions of the ACWF and the NWCCW are also strengthened. For example, the law authorizes them to issue opinion letters to relevant agencies or institutions in dealing with cases involving violations of women's rights. In addition, the procuratorate acquires the power to file public interest litigations in protecting women's rights for the first time.

In the last four decades, the ACWF has maintained a pivotal role in the whole process of the Women's Law, reflecting changing social needs and strengthening its own status. It serves as one of the typical examples of active state corporatism.

The DWW and Special Collective Contracts for the Protection of Female Workers

The DWW conducted research every year on protecting the interests of female workers, from which it discovered that the problem of infringing on the rights of female workers was severe even though multiple laws protect these rights. The problem has become worse since a large number of migrant women workers joined the workforce. Given inadequate law enforcement in

China, however, the DWW had yet to find effective ways to protect the interests of women workers. In 2005, it began to launch a campaign to push enterprises and trade unions across the country to sign special collective contracts to protect female workers. Because contracts are usually more specific and enforceable than laws in China, this has served as a concrete measure to fulfill the law articles on paper in real life.

Since the implementation of the Labor Law in 1995, trade unions at all levels have pushed the implementation of a new measure stipulated in the law—collective contracts between employers and workers, usually represented by trade unions. However, the DWW did not connect this measure with the protection of female workers until its branch in Jiangsu Province discovered and popularized the invention of a private enterprise in the province. Various interests of female workers, such as employment, salaries, working conditions, maternity insurance, gynecological examinations, and special protection during periods, pregnancy, parturition, and lactation, were included in the collective contract signed by women representatives of the trade union and the employer. The DWW's Jiangsu branch treated it as a creative model and extended it to the entire province. After confirming the positive outcomes of this measure in Jiangsu, the DWW decided to adopt it as a solution to the problem of female workers' interests and then drafted a document to guide the implementation of this measure across the country. It lobbied the ACFTU to issue a regulatory document with the MOHRSS, but failed for complicated reasons.⁵⁷ However, it did not affect the pace of the work because local trade unions in 20 provinces had successfully issued such regulatory documents with provincial departments of the ministry and branches of the China Enterprise Confederation—another GONGO representing employers. In the following years, the DWW and its branches successfully lobbied the NPC at both central and local levels to list this

⁵⁷ The author's interview with Qian Xiaofei, chief of the DWW's Second Division of Interests and Rights, on September 29, 2009, in Beijing.

practice in the Law on Employment Contracts and the Implementation Measures of the Women's Law. After implementing the Special Rules on the Labor Protection of Female Employees, the DWW made great efforts to include its articles in special collective contracts for the protection of female workers. In recent years, it has also tried to incorporate those new measures of maternity services mentioned before into these contracts. Under the supervision and prodding of the DWW, by September 2017, 79.999 million women workers had been covered by 1.366 million such special collective contracts across the country.⁵⁸ It has become the most practical policy ensuring the interests of female workers in China. When the DWW participated in the revision of the Women's Law in 2021, it pushed for including special collective contracts for the protection of female workers in the law and eventually succeeded. The measure originated from a single enterprise and is now widespread throughout the country and institutionalized in national legislation.

The CFPA and Grassroots Self-government on Family Planning (GSGFP)

The implementation of the one-child policy led to a series of problems in China. In addition to peasants' antagonism toward local government enforcers, it induced damages to women's reproductive health, discrimination against women who did not bear a son, and even violence against infant girls (Greenhalgh, 2001). Consequently, disturbing imbalances in reported sex ratios at birth appeared, with the ratio of boys to girls as high as 117:100 in 2000 (Hershatter 2004, 1006-1007). These negative consequences received the attention of the NPFPC. Under the influence of the 1994 Cairo Conference on Population and Development and the 1995 Beijing Conference on Women, as well as the help of international organizations and experts, the Commission carried out

⁵⁸ See the DWW's 2017 work report presented by Shi Dai, vice chairwoman of the ACFTU taking charge of women's work, at the Fifth Session of the Sixth Women Workers' Committee of the ACFTU on February 1, 2018. It is available at <http://www.acftu.net/template/10041/file.jsp?cid=1225&aid=96038>, accessed March 20, 2019.

client-centered and woman-oriented innovations since the late 1990s (Greenhalgh, 2001; Xie and Tang, 2011; Kaufman 2012a, 596-598).

When the CFPA was established in 1980, it was merely an ordinary top-down association for foreign communication.⁵⁹ Along with the forced implementation of family planning by the state, the CFPA had set up divisions at every level of the government and even in most villages, urban communities, enterprises, and other institutions. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, some local divisions of the CFPA experimented with a new measure to carry out the one-child policy—incorporating family planning into villagers’/urban residents’ self-government. With variations in different localities, the basic model of the GSGFP was similar: Local divisions of the CFPA, elected villagers’/urban residents’ committees, and all villagers/urban residents or their representatives negotiated to enact village/urban community regulations on family planning. Endorsed by the government, the regulations became agreements of all sides and served as a mechanism to restrict both the grassroots and the government. In this way, the coercive power of the government was curbed, and villagers/urban residents would observe each others’ abidance of the one-child policy. In the meantime, more services were delivered to women. This new measure spread gradually and caught the attention of the CFPA at the national level and the NPFPC, which was seeking ways to carry out innovations. Jiang Chunyun became the chairman of the CFPA in 1998 and played a crucial role in advocating the GSGFP. As a member of the politburo and a vice chairman of the standing committee of the NPC at that time, Jiang was an influential politician. After his reelection as the CFPA’s chairman in 2006, Jiang began to push the GSGFP to become a national policy. The NPFPC and the CFPA jointly issued a regulatory document as the general guidance for the GSGFP in 2008. Since 2009, the CFPA launched two large-scale campaigns to

⁵⁹ The author’s interview with a major leader of the CFPA on Sep. 15, 2009, in Beijing.

popularize the GSGFP across the country. The policy served as a buffer or even an antidote to previously implemented coercive measures.

Along with China's relaxation of the one-child policy, the NPFPC was dissolved and incorporated into other agencies in March 2013. The One-child policy was replaced by the two-child policy in 2015. Accordingly, the GSGFP was transformed into a more service-oriented mechanism in which various services were carried out and integrated with grassroots social governance. However, China's net population growth kept declining and became negative in 2022. The two-child policy was replaced by the three-child policy in 2021. As the government switches the family planning policy from stringent birth control to boosting fertility, it is reasonable to imagine that the GSGFP may gradually fade out.

The Maple Center and the Program of Community Intervention in Domestic Issues (PCIDI)

The Maple Center, previously named Women's Research Institute, has run four women's hotlines since the 1990s. From the hotline services, Wang Xingjuan found many infringements on women's rights within their families. However, these problems remained unresolved because of the collapse of the unit system (*danwei tizhi*) and the simultaneous underdevelopment of the community system. After careful research, including surveys and data analysis, the Maple Center located the source of the problems and created a community intervention model for domestic issues based on Wang's design. To test the model in practice, the Maple Center persuaded the Boll Foundation and the Ford Foundation to provide funds. It also contacted the Women's Federation of Beijing but ultimately failed because the leaders of the federation were only interested in the funds and the design and meant to exclude the Maple Center from the implementation of the program.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ The author's interview with Wang Xingjuan on Aug. 26, 2009, in Beijing.

The Women's Federation of Tianjin⁶¹ eventually accepted the program and facilitated its implementation. The Maple Center turned to the Women's Federation of Tianjin because they cooperated in 1989 to hold training workshops to improve women cadres' awareness of political participation. Wang Zhiqiu, chairwoman of the Women's Federation of Tianjin, knew Wang Xingjuan well and believed it was an innovative program for protecting women's rights and worth experimentation. Because of the special status of the women's federation, the Tianjin Committee of the CCP approved the program, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs ratified the funding from the two foreign foundations.⁶² From 2001 to 2005, the program was implemented in six streets⁶³ of Tianjin and was proved to be very successful.

The tenet of the PCIDI is to provide a series of human-centered services and education in communities by establishing connected networks of the official system, nongovernmental system, and residents themselves. Because the program had secured the support of each level of the government, various official institutions were mobilized to form a responsive network for the protection of women's rights; street offices, public security bureaus, procuratorates, courts, women's federations at every level, residents' committees, hospitals, and other relevant sectors were all involved in the network to perform their respective functions. The Maple Center held numerous workshops to train police officers, procurators, judges, street cadres, doctors, and residents to promote gender awareness and service skills. It also organized three groups of volunteers to serve community residents, including psychological counseling, social work, and legal service. These volunteers comprised psychological consultants, students, and retired lawyers. Women who had benefited from the program were also mobilized to become participants to help

⁶¹ Tianjin is one of the four provincial-level municipalities in China. The other three are Beijing, Shanghai, and Chongqing.

⁶² The author's interview with Wang Xingjuan on Aug. 26, 2009, in Beijing.

⁶³ "Street" means an area governed by a street office, the lowest level of government in China's cities.

other women with similar problems. The three networks were so interactive that women's touching one node would lead to the involvement of other nodes. The decision-making institution of the program was a management committee composed of personnel from the Maple Center, Women's Federations, and officials from street offices and district government. However, this committee did not manage daily work. The daily administrator of the program was a relatively independent institution called Half Sky Homeland (*banbiantian jiyuan*), which was established in each community participating in the experiment and included resident volunteers.

After five years of PCIDI implementation, those communities' overall environment was changed so significantly that various family problems dropped dramatically. Half Sky Homeland has become a well-known brand of community construction in Tianjin. The Women's Federation of Tianjin was enormously proud of this program and invited the CCP and government officials of Tianjin to visit those experimental communities. Impressed by the significant changes in the communities, those officials decided to extend the model of the PCIDI to the entire city in 2008. Although the Maple Center left Tianjin after the five-year term of experimentation, the legacy of the PCIDI has thrived and become a public policy of the city (Wu 2021, 323-324). The Tianjin CCP committee and the municipal government have included the model—named after Half Sky Homeland—in the city's community development plan and appropriated funds for it. By 2018, the model of Half Sky Homeland had been extended to the entire region of Tianjin, including rural areas. Recognizing these achievements, the ACWF also paid attention to and highly appraised the model. It started the process of integrating the model with its project of Women's Home and spreading the model across the country.⁶⁴

The Center for Women's Law Studies and Legal Services of Peking University and the

⁶⁴ See the record of an interview between Wang Xingjuan and a journalist of Top Her in 2018, available at <http://www.maple.org.cn/index.php/Content/view/newsno/2084.html>, accessed Jan. 8, 2020.

Childbearing Right of Female Graduate Students

Before 2005, to have a child was just a dream for a matriculated female graduate student in China because most universities forbade it. The legal basis of these rules was relevant provisions in the former Management Regulation on Current Students of Colleges and Universities issued by the State Education Commission, renamed the Ministry of Education (MOE), in 1990. According to the regulation, the marriage of undergraduate students was also prohibited. Because of the dramatic social change in China, the MOE initiated the process of revising the regulation in 1996. However, the process was so opaque and slow that the new regulation had not been promulgated even after almost nine years.

The Center for Women's Law Studies and Legal Services of Peking University was involved in a few lawsuits before 2005 regarding the childbearing right of female graduate students. Among them, Ms. Tang's case was the most typical. She complained that she was forced to leave graduate school when she gave birth to her child. The center decided to resolve the problem by advocating for the abolition of relevant provisions in the MOE's regulation. It conducted research on the rules of twenty universities, surveyed about 1,500 undergraduate and graduate students, and found the most students were dissatisfied with the relevant rules of their universities. With this data in hand, the center launched a media campaign to raise the issue's visibility in the public eye. Considering its good relationship with the media, the topic quickly received much attention. In January 2005, the center held a symposium to discuss the issue. In addition to jurists, scholars, and representatives of some universities, the center also invited officials from relevant governmental agencies to attend the symposium, including the MOE, the MOCA and its Beijing branch that oversee marriage registration, the NPFPC and its Beijing branch that took charge of birth quotas, and the MOPS and its Beijing branch that are responsible for household registration. According to

an interview with a major leader of the center, it was usually difficult for the center to invite government officials. Their presence at the symposium was due to the importance of the issue and the successful media warm-up preceding the symposium.⁶⁵ This symposium was a decisive event for the success of the lobbying; a consensus was achieved at the symposium that both the right to receive education and the childbearing right of female graduate students should be respected. Most importantly, various media outlets, including two popular internet portals, reported the symposium and triggered widespread public debates. Because most people argued against the regulation, the MOE decided to accelerate the revision process. In March 2005, only two months after the symposium, it promulgated a new regulation in which all the restrictive provisions on the marriage and childbearing rights of college and university students were erased.

Policy Influence of the ADVN, Fanbao, and Equality

The Anti-domestic Violence Network of the China Law Society (ADV N) was established in 2000. Its founding resulted from the combined initiatives of a group of experts, scholars, reporters, and leaders of women's organizations, including Wang Xingjuan and Guo Jianmei (Wu 2021, 316-318). Zhang (2009a) points out that the construction of this organization was also an outcome of dynamic interactions among a constellation of both global and local feminist forces and agents. Chen Mingxia, a well-known jurist at the Law Institute of the CASS, served as the coordinator and the chairperson of the ADVN's board.⁶⁶ As a jurist, Chen has personal connections (*guanxi*) in the China Law Society. Therefore, she persuaded the China Law Society to accept the ADVN as its secondary organization. On the one hand, the ADVN was a grassroots organization because it had a bottom-up origin and was financially independent of the state⁶⁷. On the other hand,

⁶⁵ The author's interview with Li Ying, then vice director of the center, on August 25, 2009, in Beijing.

⁶⁶ She was also the director of the Center for Gender and Law Studies under the Law Institute of the CASS and the deputy director of the Women/Gender Studies Center of the CASS.

⁶⁷ Its funds mainly came from four foreign institutions in Holland, U.S., Sweden, and Norway.

it maintained good relationships with several organizations with strong official backgrounds that served as its umbrellas, including the China Law Society, the CASS, and the ACWF. Chen maintains a close relationship with the ACWF, especially its Department of Women's Rights and Interests. She invited three consecutive department directors to serve as the ADVN's special counselors.

The ADVN was a network with individual and institutional members throughout the country. Many were local Women's Federations, especially at the provincial level. Still, many individual members were legal experts or other specialists who had opportunities to participate in the formulation of local policies. As a result, the ADVN was an influential advocate in many provinces. By 2009, 21 provinces had enacted legislation or regulations on domestic violence, and another four had included relevant measures in other laws.⁶⁸ By 2015, 29 provinces had carried out anti-domestic violence policies.⁶⁹ By 2011, more than 100 Basic People's Courts had applied to be experimental courts for domestic violence trials (Wu 2021, 327). These achievements were mainly because of joint efforts of the ADVN and local Women's Federations. With China Law Society in its title, the ADVN had obtained both legitimacy and trustworthiness in many localities. When it held symposiums in several provinces, various officials in relevant sectors of local governments attended (Wu 2021, 323). The ADVN also organized workshops in both Beijing and other provinces to train police officers and judges to promote consciousness and skills in dealing with domestic violence (Milwertz and Bu 2007, 143-144). With the approval of local governments, those police officers and judges were required to accept such training.⁷⁰ Zhang (2009b, 232-234) presents more details of the ADVN's partnering with the ACWF to promote anti-domestic violence

⁶⁸ The author's interview with Chen Mingxia, former chairwoman of the ADVN's board, on October 13, 2009, in Beijing.

⁶⁹ A People's Daily reporter's interview with Song Xiuyan, then vice chairwoman of the ACWF, in December 2015, available at http://www.women.org.cn/art/2015/12/29/art_18_71931.html, accessed Nov. 8, 2018.

⁷⁰ The author's interview with Hou Zhiming, then executive director of the ADVN, on Aug. 23, 2009, in Beijing.

legislation at both the national and local levels, forming an approach she similarly calls “embedded activism.”

Because all three umbrella organizations have NPC representatives and CPPCC members, the ADVN’s channels to submit policy proposals were guaranteed to a large extent. However, these channels remained informal for it because personal connections sustained them. Du (2012, 122) has the same observation that the ADVN enjoys several alliances with CCP/state officials through professional links and personal relations, though the connection is quite loose and temporary. The ADVN used these channels regularly to submit policy proposals, based on careful research by the ADVN or invited experts. For example, the ADVN submitted proposals to the NPC or the CPPCC in 2007 and 2008 to suggest the Supreme People’s Court enact a judicial interpretation of the lawsuits involving sexual harassment (Fu and Cullen 2011, 26). For another example, as early as 2003, it submitted a proposal regarding enacting the Anti-domestic Violence Law to the NPC, which made it the first organization in China to bring forward the proposal (Milwertz and Bu 2007, 143; Wu 2021, 319). In 2007 and 2009, it submitted revised proposals of the law twice. In 2009, the ADVN also submitted proposals to the NPC and the CPPCC to suggest the Supreme Court and the MOPS innovate anti-domestic violence policies and sent a book it published in the year to the standing committee of the NPC. However, it exerted insufficient influence on the NPC as a grassroots organization. As an alternative, it turned to the ACWF to create and submit proposals. Coincidentally, the ACWF had become more favorable to push for enacting such a law at that time. This win-win motivation on both sides made the cooperation possible (Wu 2021, 323). In 2010 and 2011, the ACWF partially funded the ADVN’s research and submitted proposals to the NPC based on the research results.⁷¹ In 2012, the Anti-domestic Violence Law was put on the NPC’s

⁷¹ According to the author’s interview with Chen Mingxia on April 5, 2012, in Beijing, the ACWF usually submits proposals under its own name. However, it mentioned the ADVN when it cited the research report in the proposals.

preparatory legislative agenda. However, it was postponed because of the NPC succession in 2013. Thanks to the consistent efforts of women's organizations, the NPC started the formal legislative procedure for the Anti-domestic Violence Law. On December 27, 2015, the NPC adopted the new law.⁷²

In 2011, the MOCA launched a rectification movement that required all social organizations to register with the MOCA. As a secondary organization affiliated with the China Law Society, the ADVN could hardly fulfill the requirement. In addition, the China Law Society could not continue accepting foreign funding because of a policy change regarding foreign exchange administration in 2010.⁷³ As a response, the ADVN discontinued its official relationship with the China Law Society in March 2011 and commercially registered Fanbao, using the Anti-domestic Violence Network of China as its informal name. Fanbao maintained good relationships with the three umbrella organizations and cooperated with them in multiple activities. In 2011, it submitted a proposal regarding domestic violence to the NPC through the China Law Society. In 2012 it jointly submitted another proposal regarding enacting the Anti-domestic Violence Law to the NPC with a few institutions with official backgrounds, including the Women/Gender Studies Center of the CASS and the Center for Gender and Law Studies under the Law Institute of the CASS. Before that, it held a symposium to discuss the proposal. Multiple official organizations, including the ACWF, and some NPC representatives and CPPCC members attended.⁷⁴ Fanbao could invite people from top-down organizations and even government officials to attend many of its symposiums and forums at once. However, the decoupling no doubt negatively impacted Fanbao's status and capacities. Without the name of the China Law Society, the ACWF could no

⁷² For more details about this legislation, see the part of the ACWF in Chapter Six.

⁷³ The author's interviews with Chen Mingxia and Feng Yuan on April 5, 2012, in Beijing.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

longer officially invite Fanbao to attend its policy meetings, and Fanbao could neither invite the ACWF officials to serve as special counselors. Even worse, Fanbao's staff had been downsized to three persons, and many projects and activities previously conducted in other provinces were canceled.⁷⁵ Gradually, Fanbao lost its attractiveness to funders. Losing legitimacy in the official system and reducing funding and personnel had increasingly made its survival problematic.⁷⁶ In May 2014, Fanbao's board of directors announced its dissolution.

In October 2014, Feng Yuan, former executive director of Fanbao, established the Beijing Equality Women's Rights Institute (Equality). Although the new organization aims to fulfill the unfinished mission of the ADVN and Fanbao, it has lost most resources within the official system possessed by its predecessors. As a result, Equality relies more on the masses of women and other grassroots organizations. It set up a hotline to aid victims of domestic violence and developed an anti-domestic violence resource map and a toolkit to serve women, actions never taken by its predecessors. Shortly after its founding, Equality joined other bottom-up organizations to form a working group advocating for enacting the Anti-domestic Violence Law. After the adoption of the law, Equality has been devoted to monitoring its implementation. In 2017, it held a symposium to discuss the implementation of the Anti-domestic Violence Law and the demands of disadvantaged women. It invited many bottom-up organizations in the fields of public health, disability, and LGBTQ to attend. From 2017 to 2019, it promulgated four monitoring reports. Some research was conducted jointly with other grassroots women's organizations and LGBTQ organizations. These reports cover local legislation, implementation inspections, police and court actions, and shelter performance and put forward suggestions to relevant authorities. Some resulting policy proposals

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ See Dong Yige's online essay titled *The Rise and Fall of the Anti-Domestic Violence Network* on the website of the China Development Brief, available at <http://www.chinadevelopmentbrief.cn/articles/problems-cohabitation-rise-fall-anti-domestic-violence-network>, accessed Jan. 12, 2020.

were submitted to the NPC or the CPPCC. In addition to domestic violence, Equality pays attention to other women-related policies. In cooperation with other bottom-up organizations and experts, it responded to public opinion solicitation for enacting the Civil Code in 2019.

In general, the policy influence mode of the ADVN, Fanbao, and Equality has always been embedded pluralism. Although their closeness to the official system shows a descending curve over time, they take a non-confrontational attitude toward the state and seek opportunities to cooperate. Despite Equality's loss of resources within the official system, it still tries to embed itself in the restricted political environment and complex sociopolitical networks. All three organizations have a strong will and many actions to influence policies. As for effectiveness, the ADVN achieved more policy goals than its two successors.

2.4 The Development of Indigenous Modes of Policy Influence in Chinese Context

Unger and Chan (1995, 37) point out that within Stalinist and Maoist corporatist structures, corporatist agencies serve as “transmission belts” providing a two-way conduit between the Party center and the assigned constituencies: by top-down transmission, mobilization of workers and peasants for increased production on behalf of the nation's collective good; and by bottom-up transmission, articulation of grassroots rights and interests. They also argue that the structure became a charade in reality; directives came down through the structure, but constituent opinions and demands were not allowed to percolate up. This is an accurate description of Chinese mass organizations before the implementation of the reform and opening up policy. The deprivation of the power to participate in policymaking had made these organizations policy-takers with only one-way transmission of orders from the Party-state. During the Cultural Revolution, all these organizations ceased working. For example, Wang (2017) documents how intensifying Maoist class struggles eventually suppressed women's gender-specific interests and paralyzed the ACWF

by the onset of the Cultural Revolution.

After the implementation of the reform and opening up policy, mass organizations were either restored or created. However, they recognized they faced a highly different environment of diminishing planned economy and increasing social differentiation. To adapt to the new environment, they must reconsider their organizational goals and adjust their work to achieve them. They realized that if they disregarded the interests of their constituencies as before, they would lose their legitimacy to exist. Consequently, they tried to change their roles by engaging in more bottom-up transmission. Thus, although they still serve as a mobilization tool for the state, they have increasingly begun to represent their constituencies' interests. On the other hand, the state has also begun to adjust its role in both economic and social spheres. Because it can no longer dictate people's interests, it needs social organizations to articulate the interests of their constituencies and transmit their voices to the state. However, the state fears that uncontrolled social forces will destabilize society and threaten its rule. As a compromise, it relies on mass organizations, which are deemed trustworthy, and grants them the power to participate in decision-making.

The ACWF has undergone this process (Yang, 1999; Jin, 2001; Liu, 2001; Zhang, 2001; White, Howell, and Shang, 1996, 80-91; Howell, 2003; Shen, 2016). Representing the interests of women and children was not mentioned in any work reports of the ACWF's national congresses before 1983. In her work report presented at the fifth national congress in 1983, Kang Keqing, then chairwoman of the ACWF, stated that Ye Jianying, the vice chairman of the CCP of the time, pointed out that mass organizations should represent the interests of their constituencies at the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the founding of the PRC in 1979. She also demonstrated that the ACWF's representing and protecting the interests of women and children was

accentuated/mentioned in multiple addresses of prominent Party-state leaders and documents and further confirmed in the direction of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the CCP issued to the ACWF in April 1983.⁷⁷ As Jin (2001, 125) points out, the ACWF began to realize the pressure for change as early as the 1980s, and calls for reforming the Federation have remained constant since then. On the one hand, it continues to mobilize women to contribute to economic development and market reform. On the other hand, it has begun to defend the interests of women and tries to counteract the negative consequences of the reform on women. For example, the ACWF has taken many actions to combat gender-based discrimination in urban employment and rural land distribution. This dual role is sometimes incorporated into one program. For instance, Judd (2002) examines the “two studies” campaign launched by the ACWF in rural China since 1989 and finds its purpose is twofold: to mobilize women to contribute to the rural economy and to increase women’s competitiveness in the market economy. The FWCW was a milestone in the ACWF’s history. The Beijing Declaration and the PFA have provided a new basis for the ACWF. The PFA’s most important strategy is “gender mainstreaming,” which requires governments and all other concerned actors to integrate a gender perspective into the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of legislation, policies, programs, or any other form of planned action. Hence, women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated (Liu 2006, 925). The ACWF embraced this new agenda shortly after the FWCW and implemented the strategy in its daily work (Liu 2006, 936). In various documents and leaders’ addresses, the ACWF emphasizes influencing policies as the means “to protect women’s rights from the headstream (*cong yuantou weiquan*).” It has included policy participation in its work plan every year and has paid attention to all the processing legislation in the NPC’s legislative plan. As mentioned before, it also makes

⁷⁷ The work report is available at <http://www.women.org.cn/zhuanti/zdzt/zdbd/zgfnsyd/ljfdh/dwj/dwjwj/486768.shtml.html>, accessed August 15, 2009.

every effort to advocate for enacting or revising laws, regulations, and other policies impacting women's interests.

The ACFTU and the CFPA have also adopted a constituency-oriented agenda in the reform era. "Special collective contracts for the protection of female workers" launched by the DWW and the GSGFP launched by the CFPA are just significant attempts they have made to protect the interests of their constituencies. In fact, most mass organizations have transformed into active state corporatism in the reform era.

State corporatism is often depicted as a social structure under dictatorship for top-down control. Its main feature is that the weight of decision-making power lies very heavily on the side of the state (Unger and Chan 1995, 31). However, the variations within state corporatism have remained unnoted thus far. As stated above, whether being granted the power to participate in decision-making or not determines the motivation of state corporatist organizations to influence public policies. Once they are bestowed the power, they will become highly active in representing the interests of their constituencies and participating in the policy process. When they take such actions, they can effectively affect policy outcomes. Although the state still maintains the final say in policymaking, it must increasingly take various interests into account. Corporatism is not a concept used only to describe organizations' distance from or involvement with the state. Instead, it is an interest representation system in which the lives of millions of people are at stake.

However, it must be pointed out that interest representation of active state corporatist organizations has limitations. Because of their official status, they inherently cannot represent all their constituencies' demands, especially those that conflict with the state's interests or social and cultural context. For example, the CFPA would not represent those people who opposed and undermined the one-child policy; the DWW would not support women workers who took part in

strikes; the ACWF regularly launches propaganda movements to popularize doctrines of the Party-state in women and prettifies the image of the Chinese government in the international community. Another example is that the ACWF has never endorsed women sex workers and even avoided using the term “sex worker.” Similarly, it has never clearly shown its standpoint on LGBTQ rights (Tsimonis 2016, 68). Although the ACWF maintains good relationships with many grassroots women’s organizations and activists, it alienates itself from those the state treats as threats. After the Feminist Five were detained by the police in March 2015, for instance, the ACWF kept silent without showing any endorsement or sympathy. For another instance, the ACWF was generally absent in the #MeToo movement except for the sporadic involvement of several local Women’s Federations. In addition to these limitations, sometimes it is difficult for active state corporatist organizations to find out the genuine demands of their constituencies because of their bureaucratic working style and overlong administrative chains. The failure of the Maple Center to engage the Women’s Federation of Beijing is just an example. Tsimonis (2016) notes the dual character of the ACWF. On the one hand, the ACWF adapts to environmental changes and takes pro-constituency actions by engaging with academia, other social organizations, and the international women’s movement. On the other hand, the authoritarian regime’s morality and developmental priorities frequently set the limit on how far the Federation can go in its social work and advocacy, resulting in its inconsistent and even conflicting attitude toward women. In 2015 the Central Committee of the CCP commanded a new wave of reforms of mass organizations aiming to broaden the representativeness of these organizations. After investigating the reforms in multiple local branches of the ACWF, Zhou (2019) finds that although local Women’s Federations expanded their popular base in the short term, those institutional problems such as political marginalization, bureaucratization, and ineffective implementation will remain in the long term. Even worse, the

foremost concern of the reform has been the “re-politicization” of the mass organizations to uphold the authority of the Party because it limits the development of state feminism by limiting ideological innovation and compromising women’s interests whenever they conflict with the interests of the Party-state (Zhou 2019, 26).

What accompanies the pessimistic conceptualization of state corporatism is suspicions about the genuineness of Chinese grassroots organizations. For example, treating the Women’s Research Institute, the predecessor of the Maple Center, as a critical case, Cornue (1999, 73) holds that women’s organizations in China particularly operate in a blended relationship with the state and are not always free of formal bureaucratic channels. These contradict much of public space, public sphere, and civil society theory.

Admittedly, the non-confrontational, cooperative attitude toward the state is prevalent among grassroots women’s organizations in China. As shown in many cases of this chapter, these grassroots organizations make great efforts to build channels into official institutions and organizations with official backgrounds, such as the ACWF. Most interviewees of this research claimed their organizations did not oppose the state; on the contrary, they were trying to establish good relationships with the government and sometimes expected to implement government-funded programs. However, this does not imply they want to be incorporated into or coordinated by the government. When they were asked their opinions on the relationship between cooperation with the state and organizational autonomy, the interviewees answered, without hesitation, that cooperation should not be achieved at the price of autonomy. Li Ying expressed the typical view as follows⁷⁸:

“We can gradually transfer our ideas to the government by cooperating with the

⁷⁸ The author’s interview with Li Ying on August 25, 2009, in Beijing.

government. Cooperating with the government is the means to make NGOs the mainstream and make the government listen to us. If we oppose the government, we cannot proceed. How can we continue our work if we commit suicide? However, NGOs must maintain their autonomy. Although they cooperate with the government, they bring forth their own ideas. In this way, they will not be turned into government appendages. Our center does not cater to the government for channels by sacrificing our autonomy. The relationship between cooperation and autonomy is a question of controlling the boundary. It requires our wisdom and ability to deal with problems with flexibility.”

In contrast to corporatist organizations, grassroots women’s organizations are derived from bottom-up activism in the reform era. They all maintain a nonhierarchical structure and voluntary membership and are independent of the state regarding financial resources, personnel, and management. These organizations have overlapping jurisdictions and compete for resources. These characteristics make them no different from their counterparts in Western democracies. However, many Chinese organizations behave differently from Western pluralist organizations because they are situated in a different political context. Given a dominant Party-state, they must follow the rules and keep in contact with the official system. They must rely on informal channels and connections to a large extent when falling short of open and institutionalized access to the political system. This embeddedness is an effective strategy for these organizations to survive and achieve organizational goals. If the Maple Center had not contacted the Women’s Federation of Tianjin and involved the Tianjin government, the PCIDI would still have been a program on paper, and various infringements on women’s rights would still have remained in hundreds of communities in the city. If the Center for Women’s Law Studies and Legal Services of Peking University had not invited multiple officials to attend its symposium, female graduate students nationwide would still have

been forbidden to bear children. Still, legislation on anti-domestic violence would be a myth without the cooperation between the ADVN and Women's Federations. In all three cases, grassroots women's organizations accomplished their objectives by cooperating with the state without sacrificing autonomy. Although the strategy may not guarantee the achievement of all individual goals, it does not result in necessary encroachments on organizational autonomy. Embedded pluralism in China has been essential for Chinese women to defend their interests on public policy issues.

Conceptual models developed in Western societies are helpful for understanding current affairs in China. However, they can only be applied with adaptation to the Chinese context (Tan 2007, 68-69). "Autonomy fetish"⁷⁹ has made most research on Chinese social organizations overemphasize the form of civil society/pluralism and corporatism—distance to the state. What has been neglected is the essence of these two systems of interest representation—whether and how these organizations articulate the interests of their constituencies and influence public policies. In contemporary China, most mass organizations actively represent the interests of their constituencies and influence public policies with the power granted by the state, while many grassroots women's organizations try to do so by cooperating with the state. State corporatist organizations may not be merely a one-sided tool of the state, and pluralist organizations may not isolate themselves from the state. The two indigenous modes of policy influence reflect the efforts of Chinese women's organizations to defend the interests of Chinese women and promote gender equality under the complicated sociopolitical conditions in China.

2.5 Conclusion

By mapping out the policy influence of women's organizations in China, this chapter finds

⁷⁹ Sanyal (1997, 21) uses this term to describe the belief that "an NGO's autonomy is best protected and nurtured by avoiding institutional linkages with state and market institutions."

that different policy influences are evident not only between grassroots women's organizations and organizations with official backgrounds but also within these two categories. Both organizational nature—the relationships with the state—and organizational capacity impact social organizations' policy influence. Among Chinese women's organizations, mass organizations and official think tanks play an important role in the policy process, while most formal grassroots organizations are increasingly seeking such a role. Two indigenous mainstream modes of policy influence—active state corporatism and embedded pluralism—have emerged in women's organizations. Active state corporatism embodies the adaptation of official organizations to changing social conditions and a globalizing world. Embedded pluralism reflects the growing grassroots activism within a restricted political environment and complex sociopolitical networks. However, not all state corporatist organizations are active policy advocates. Those top-down organizations other than mass organizations and women's studies centers in universities seldom participate in the policy process and mainly perform symbolic functions; therefore, they are named “symbolic state corporatism.” Those pluralist organizations with informal organizing lack the capacity to influence policies and keep silent in the policy arena; this noninfluence mode is named “silent pluralism” accordingly. The policy influence mode an organization adopts is relatively stable. However, it can also change in some cases. The BCDC is the only organization in this chapter that has degraded from embedded pluralism to silent pluralism, although it is still a formal organization. On the contrary, an informal organization may evolve into an active policy advocate through formalization, as the GAD and the Media Monitor for Women Network displayed.

The Media Monitor for Women Network, Feminist Voices, and the YFAG—the GAD was also involved to some extent—formed a new force in the Chinese women's movement and represented another mode of policy influence. In its heyday, the force changed the landscape of

the Chinese women's movement and almost made another mainstream mode of policy influence in the women's field. Unfortunately, this promising troop, as well as China's #MeToo movement, were suppressed by the Party-state. Surprisingly, the Center for Women's Law Studies and Legal Services of Peking University and Zhongze, a notable organization adopting embedded pluralism, also suffered crackdowns twice. These changes indicate that the state's attitude toward a particular type of organization or some subgroups may not be constant. Relatively safe issues could become politically sensitive over time.

The global women's movement is a joint endeavor of women living in different parts of the world and reflects their diversified interests and contexts. Ferree and Martin (1995, 2) point out that "feminist organizations are outcomes of situationally and historically specific processes. In each time and place, feminism reflects its history and prior developments, as well as present opportunities and constraints." This chapter reveals various forms of indigenous feminist activism in China, resulting from prior developments and reflecting current opportunities and constraints. Although with limitations, they dance in chains by bargaining with the state for the interests of their constituencies and for more influence on public policies. By doing so, they try to empower women in authoritarian China and carve out more space for themselves.

Chapter 3 HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS

This chapter studies another field of social organizations—health organizations. In contrast to the women’s field, issues and organizations in this field are relatively new. Some health issues, such as HIV/AIDS¹, may be inherently more sensitive because governments’ misconduct and conflictual cultural elements are involved. However, the interest demands of various groups in the health field are supposed to be no less intensive than those in the women’s field. Therefore, this chapter selects the health field and compares it with the women’s field to explore modes of policy influence. As this chapter will show, some organizations in this field display distinct features of policy influence from mainstream women’s organizations, which signals new modes of policy influence.

These organizations are named “health organizations” in this study because they all deal with health-related issues, regardless of public health issues or problems for particular groups. Some organizations were founded by patients or persons affected by relevant diseases, while other organizations were not. As a result, neither “public health organizations” nor “patients’ organizations” used by other researchers fit the research objectives of this study. In China, HIV/AIDS is a highly policy-related health issue and has triggered an organization boom. Thus, this research mainly studies organizations involved in the HIV/AIDS issue. Other diseases related to or comparable to HIV/AIDS also draw people’s attention, and social organizations arose in these groups. This research selects organizations for hepatitis and hemophilia² to study because they

¹ HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus, while AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. AIDS describes symptoms and illnesses that happen at the final stage of HIV infection if left untreated.

² Hemophilia is a bleeding disorder that slows blood clotting. The major types of this condition are hemophilia A (also known as classic hemophilia) and hemophilia B (also known as Christmas disease). Although the two types have similar signs and symptoms, they are caused by different gene mutations. Another form of the disorder, acquired hemophilia, is not caused by inherited gene mutations. This rare condition is characterized by abnormal bleeding into the skin, muscles, or other soft tissues, usually beginning in adulthood. See <http://ghr.nlm.nih.gov/condition/hemophilia>, accessed Dec. 14, 2011.

represent a huge and a small patient group, respectively.³ Other salient health issues, such as SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) and COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus Disease-2019), are not selected because they did not lead to an organization boom. Like Chapter Two, this chapter starts with an introduction to the development of health organizations. It will also provide a typology for these organizations based on their origins and working domains.

3.1 The Development of Health Organizations in China

China's first AIDS case was identified in 1985. When the AIDS epidemic surfaced among 146 injecting drug users (IDUs) in the southwest border province of Yunnan in 1989, many in the Chinese leadership believed the problem was limited to minority people in particular regions (Ma et al. 2006, 289). Early reactions of the Chinese government included border control, a ban on the import of blood products, and strengthened laws against drug use and prostitution (Wu et al. 2007, 680). However, these measures turned out to be ineffective in stopping the spread of the epidemic. When the "blood disaster"⁴ took place in central China, especially Henan Province, in the 1990s, both local and central governments tried to cover up the facts (Wang 2021, 161-164). By 1998, HIV had reached all 31 provinces of China and was growing exponentially (Wu et al. 2007, 680; Wang et al. 2008, 1599). Thanks to a few dauntless medical workers and reporters, the truth of the "blood disaster" was disclosed in the late 1990s (Wang 2021, 162-163). Under the pressures of the

³ There are no exact numbers of patients. Popular estimates are that China has about 100 million people infected with HBV (hepatitis B virus) and 70-100 thousand people with hemophilia.

⁴ In the 1990s, the entire country was under a cash rush. Some leaders in Henan Province proposed a new idea for earning money—encouraging the establishment of blood stations and mobilizing peasants to sell their blood or blood plasma. To increase the number of donations, these peasants were re-transfused with pooled blood of the same blood types after plasma extraction. Thus, if one donor carried HIV, all the other donors were infected. The tainted blood or plasma was sold to various buyers, such as hospitals and producers of blood products. The virus further entered the bodies of those innocent victims who transfused the tainted blood or consumed the products made from the tainted blood. This unsanitary blood/plasma collection had spread to adjacent provinces of Henan. The exact number of people who contracted HIV in this way remains unknown. See Gao Yaojie's (2009) testimony at a roundtable before the Congressional-executive Commission on China of the 107th U.S. Congress. Also see Erwin (2006) and Guan (2020).

international community and domestic media and activists, the Chinese government recognized the growing problem of HIV/AIDS in China in June 2001 (Gill et al. 2002, 97; Kaufman, 2010; Chan 2011, 69; Wang 2021, 163-164). Nevertheless, the government did not address the AIDS crisis seriously until the outbreak of SARS in 2003, from which the successive leadership of Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao began to feel that severe infectious diseases a threat to economic and social stability (Wu et al. 2007, 684; Saich 2008, 110; Kaufman 2009, 157-158; Chan 2011, 69; Li and Li 2011, 204-205; Knutsen 2012, 172-181; Wang 2021, 164-167). In December 2003, Premier Wen Jiabao announced the “Four Frees and One Care” policy⁵. In February 2004, the State Council established an AIDS Working Committee (SCAWC) under the leadership of a vice premier to coordinate and promote collaboration among government agencies, the private sector, and civil society. The office of the SCAWC resides in the MOH. China revised the Law on the Prevention and Treatment of Infectious Diseases in 2004, which was the first-time national legislation that specially targeted HIV/AIDS. Subsequently, the Regulations on the Prevention and Treatment of AIDS was approved by the State Council in January 2006 and soon became effective in March. In the same year, the State Council enacted a second Action Plan (2006-2010) for Containing HIV/AIDS Epidemic.⁶ Recognizing the limitation of state resources to combat HIV/AIDS, the Chinese government began to seek partnerships with multiple actors outside and inside China, including UN agencies, other states, international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs), private business corporations, and domestic social organizations (Xia, 2004; Chan, 2011; Yip, 2014; Noakes 2018, 70-86; Wang 2021, 167-170).⁷ In addition to funding, global norms, such as the

⁵ Free Antiretroviral (ARV) drugs to all AIDS patients living in rural areas and patients with financial difficulties living in urban areas; free voluntary counseling and testing (VCT); free drugs to HIV-infected pregnant women to prevent mother-to-child transmission and free HIV testing of newborn babies; free schooling for children orphaned by AIDS; care and economic assistance to the households of people living with HIV/AIDS (Shen and Yu 2005, 905).

⁶ From 2001 to 2021, China enacted and implemented four action plans to combat HIV/AIDS epidemic.

⁷ Partners include UN agencies (e.g., UNAIDS, WHO, UNICEF, and the World Bank), INGOs (e.g., Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund hereafter), the Clinton Foundation, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation), sovereign

treatment of people living with HIV/AIDS and the inclusion of affected and marginalized persons as well as NGOs in the response, were also transferred into China (Gu and Renwick 2008, 102-105; Kaufman 2012b, 229-230; Wang 2021, 170-173, 189). As Yip (2014, 137) comments, China's response to HIV/AIDS has come along a journey from denial to awakening and from a weak to a strong response. In this historical context, health organizations began to spring up in China and play essential roles (Xia 2004, 117-121; Li and Li 2011, 209-210; Teets 2014, 102-109; Yu, 2016; Wang 2021, 173-178).

Like women's organizations, health organizations by no means fall short of ones with official backgrounds, including mass organizations (Xu et al. 2005, 914).⁸ With the command and vertical mobilization from top CCP leaders, relevant mass organizations, including the ACWF, the ACFTU, the CCYL, the CFPA, the Red Cross Society of China (RCSC), and All China Federation of Industry and Commerce (ACFIC), have all participated in combating HIV/AIDS epidemic.⁹ However, mass organizations are not protagonists on this stage. China's main official AIDS organization is the Chinese Association of STD¹⁰ and AIDS Prevention and Control (CASAPC), established in 1993 when the HIV/AIDS epidemic just emerged in China. The CASAPC is not the oldest official organization in the AIDS field. The Chinese Preventive Medicine Association (CPMA) and the Chinese Foundation for Prevention of STD and AIDS (CFPSA) were founded in 1987 and 1988, respectively. All three are affiliated with the MOH, the primary government agency

states (e.g., United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom), as well as private business corporations (e.g., the Global Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS). China cooperated with more than forty international organizations and countries on the prevention and control of AIDS in China. International AIDS cooperation programs covered all of China's thirty-one provincial units. See Chan (2011, 74-85), and Xia (2004, 110-117).

⁸ According to Deng and Zhao (2014, 202), there are 75 national GONGOs related to health in China, 53 of which are under the MOH. This research will only focus on those major official organizations combating HIV/AIDS and hepatitis. Mass organizations, except the Red Cross Society of China, usually are not counted as health GONGOs. However, this research also includes those involved in combating HIV/AIDS.

⁹ Each mass organization except the CFPA has a major leader as a member of the SCAWC. A vice minister of the MOH represents the CFPA in the SCAWC.

¹⁰ STD stands for sexually transmitted disease.

dealing with public health issues.¹¹ As representatives of AIDS organizations in mainland China, these three organizations regularly attend international AIDS conferences. Two relevant health organizations affiliated with the MOH are the Chinese Society of Blood Transfusion (CSBT) and the Chinese Foundation for Hepatitis Prevention and Control (CFHPC), founded in 1988 and 1998, respectively. There are no official organizations for rare diseases, such as hemophilia, in China.

It is worth mentioning another important institution in the field of health—the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Its official status is a public institution (*shiye danwei*) affiliated with the MOH. In practice, it performs various de facto administrative functions in food security, occupation security, security of health products, and environmental hygiene, in addition to conducting research and providing technological services. With local branches at each above-county administrative level, it is also a central institution implementing public health policies. Within the CDC, the National Center for AIDS/STD Control and Prevention (NCAIDS) is specifically responsible for HIV/AIDS problem. After international funds swarmed into China, the CDC served as the Principal Recipient (PR) of multiple projects, including the Global Fund projects, making it the main funding controller for AIDS prevention and treatment. To justify this situation, the Chinese government intentionally emphasizes its feature of public welfare institution (*gongyi shiye danwei*). Combining both roles of quasi-government agency and public welfare institution, this double-faced institution takes a special part in the sphere of public health and the AIDS field in particular.

¹¹ The nominal sponsoring organization (*yewu zhuguan danwei*) of the CPMA is the China Association for Science and Technology. However, it is, in fact, affiliated with the MOH. The MOH controls most of its resources and its essential personnel appointments. Two former vice ministers of health served as its directors.

Compared with women's organizations, health organizations have a relatively short history. Most bottom-up organizations in this field were founded in the 21st century, and only a handful can be traced back to the 1990s.

The earliest organizations in the HIV/AIDS field were not created by particular groups affected by HIV/AIDS, such as IDUs, MSM (men who have sex with men), and PLWHA (people living with HIV/AIDS). Wan Yanhai, an expert in public health, started the Aizhi Action Project in 1994 in Beijing to promote HIV/AIDS awareness among local MSM and the general public. This project registered with the Haidian District Administration for Industry and Commerce in 2002, changing its name to Aizhixing Institute of Health Education¹² (Aizhixing). Zhang Beichuan, a professor at the Qingdao Medical College, started the bi-monthly Friends Newsletter in 1998, the first openly published gay community magazine in China. The magazine carried much-needed information on HIV prevention to China's marginalized and largely underground gay community (Gill 2002, 35). Likewise, the first organization for the care of PLWHA, named the Homeland of Love, was founded by a group of doctors and nurses in Beijing YouAn Hospital in 1998. The following year, a similar organization was created in Beijing Ditan Hospital by some sympathetic doctors and nurses. It registered with the Beijing Bureau of Civil Affairs under the name of The Home of Red Ribbon in 2005. More such organizations were established after 2003, with their services extended to all aspects of AIDS prevention and treatment. The origins of their founders can be continually traced along these two lines—AIDS activists and persons with backgrounds in China's health system. The former group includes Hu Jia's Loving Source, Li Dan's China Orchid AIDS Project (COAP), and Jia Ping's Global Fund Watch Initiative (GFWI). The latter group usually has some official background. Examples include China HIV/AIDS Information Network

¹² The organization's official name changed several times, but the most famous name was Aizhixing Institute of Health Education.

(CHAIN) and Chaoyang Kangzhong created by Wang Ruotao, a former official of the NCAIDS, the Beijing Sunshine Doctors Consulting Service Center (Sunshine Doctors) established by Zhang Ke, a famous doctor in Beijing YouAn Hospital, and ThinkTank Research Center for Health Development, started by joint efforts of a former official of the MOH, two former presidents of the Chinese Academy of Preventive Medicine, and a businessman. Because these organizations are not organized by particular groups affected by HIV/AIDS, this research categorizes them as non-group-based AIDS organizations.

With the increasing visibility of the HIV/AIDS problem and governments' acquiescence or even encouragement, group-based AIDS organizations grew fast. They are mainly organized by PLWHA or so-called high-risk groups, including MSM, IDUs, and CSW (commercial sex workers). Most are community-based, so their activities are limited to specific geographical areas. A few of these organizations developed into national organizations, with their activities extended to more than one geographical region of the country. Well-known organizations within PLWHA include the Ark of Love and China Alliance of People Living with HIV/AIDS (CAP+) led by Meng Lin, Mangrove Support Group (MSG) founded by Li Xiang, AIDS Care China and International Treatment Preparedness Coalition (China Region) (ITPC-China) led by Thomas, and Birch Woods National Alliance of PLWHA created by Bai Hua.¹³ Women's Network against AIDS—China (WNAC) is an organizational coalition of 27 groups from various regions of China. This coalition, led by He Tiantian and her successor, Yuan Wenli, strives to improve women's lives affected by HIV/AIDS. There are not many national organizations in the circle of MSM groups. The biggest one was a coalition of MSM groups called the China Male Tongzhi Health Forum (CMTHF)

¹³ These leaders' names are their well-known pseudonyms in the circle of HIV/AIDS. It is common for PLWHA to use pseudonyms to protect their identities.

chaired by Tong Ge, a famous writer and scholar in the Chinese gay community. “Because sex work and drug use are illegal, groups representing these populations are scarce and are usually led by a non-affected person or by government-affiliated groups at local levels” (Kaufman 2009, 162-163). It is consistent with the author’s observation. The only group-based organization identified as “national” was the Chinese Women’s Rights Workshops (CWRW) created by Ye Haiyan in 2005. Unlike other persons in these groups, Ye admitted her experience as a sex worker.

Regarding other diseases, Beijing Yirenping Center (Yirenping) was the most active bottom-up organization in the community of hepatitis, founded by Lu Jun in 2006. The Hemophilia Home of China (HHC) is the major national organization in the hemophilia community. Four patient activists created the organization in 2000.

As in the field of women’s organizations, there also exist informal cyber-based groups in the health field. Twelve internet websites, five for hepatitis and seven for HIV/AIDS, are included in this study for comparison.¹⁴

3.2 Mapping out the Policy Influence of Health Organizations

Like women’s organizations, health organizations can also be classified as top-down and bottom-up organizations; the latter can be further divided into formal and informal organizations. Among formal bottom-up organizations, AIDS organizations are singled out as a unique field because of the particularity of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. According to the previous introduction to the development of AIDS organizations, they can be divided into non-group-based organizations and group-based organizations created by PLWHA or high-risk groups. The former can be classified as organizations created by persons from the health system and AIDS activists, and the

¹⁴ There are no internet websites for patients with hemophilia.

latter can be categorized based on their geographical limits—community-level organizations and national-level organizations. Table 3.1 shows the general pattern of the policy influence of health organizations.

Table 3.1 General Pattern of the Policy Influence of Health Organizations in China

policy influence	top-down organizations	bottom-up organizations					
		AIDS organizations				non-AIDS organizations	informal organizations
		non-group-based organizations		group-based organizations			
		health system	AIDS activists	community organizations by PLWHA and high-risk groups	national organizations by PLWHA and high-risk groups		
willingness	Low	Low	High	Moderate	High	High	Low-Moderate
actions	Moderate	Low	High	Low	High	High	Low
effectiveness	Low	Low	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Low

3.2.1 Top-down Organizations

Unlike women's organizations, top-down health organizations do not show variation regarding policy influence. The consistency within this category is their common unwillingness and low effectiveness in influencing policies despite the moderate participation of some organizations in the policy process.

As mentioned before, relevant mass organizations have all participated in combating the HIV/AIDS epidemic. For example, the ACWF established a coordinating group within its system and formulated a strategic plan for AIDS prevention and control in 2003, the turning year of the central government's AIDS policy. Cooperating with the MOH, the ACWF launched a "face-to-face" project under the well-known national project of China Comprehensive AIDS Response in 2004. In addition to the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, its main task was to promote HIV/AIDS awareness among women and the general public and mobilize high-risk

women to participate in VCT. In April 2008, the ACWF conducted fundraising successfully and established a fund to help AIDS orphans and other children affected by HIV/AIDS. In 2013, it started another project to educate grassroots ACWF cadres and rural women about the prevention of HIV/AIDS. However, no records have shown that the ACWF played a role in enacting or revising laws, national plans, or other AIDS-related policies. Although Jiang Yue'e, former director of the Department of Women's Rights and Interests of the ACWF, mentioned influencing laws and policies related to AIDS at a forum held in November 2010¹⁵, similar words were absent in statements of major ACWF leaders, and no actions have been discovered in the following years. This low level of participation in influencing AIDS-related policies contrasts with its outstanding efforts in the policy area of women.

Other mass organizations are in a similar manner. They participate in HIV/AIDS combat, e.g., the ACFTU in migrant workers, the CCYL in youth, the CFPA in family planning, and the ACFIC in private enterprises and migrant workers. Their common feature is to focus on service delivery rather than policy affairs. It is also the case for the RCSC, the seemingly most relevant mass organization to HIV/AIDS. This chapter will introduce and analyze the RCSC as a detailed case later.

As introduced before, China's leading official AIDS organization is the CASAPC. Since the inflow of foreign AIDS funding, it served as PR or SR (sub-recipient) for almost all projects, including the Global Fund, the China-Gates Foundation project for AIDS prevention and treatment, the China Aids Roadmap Tactical Support, and projects from UNAIDS and UNICEF, among others. It was also one of the major recipients of the National Social Mobilization Project on AIDS Prevention and Treatment since 2002 and took over the management of the project from the

¹⁵ <http://epaper.legaldaily.com.cn/fzrb/content/20101202/Article02004GN.htm>, accessed December 10, 2010.

SCAWC in 2010. After the Global Fund withdrew from China in 2014, the CASAPC has increasingly used domestic funding from governments and enterprises. By implementing these projects, it has conducted tons of work in AIDS education, behavioral intervention, technical training, HIV testing, patient care, and family support. However, it seldom submitted policy proposals regarding AIDS prevention and treatment, either for new policies or changing existing policies. The wording of influencing policies was rarely found in statements of its current and former major leaders. Although it may participate in policy-related meetings held by relevant government agencies, it is by no means an active and influential actor. When implementing those projects, the CASAPC strengthened its relationships with grassroots AIDS organizations. It serves as a bridge between the grassroots and the government, via which voices of the grassroots may reach the ears of policymakers. Through these projects, grassroots organizations may influence government policies indirectly (Teets 2014, 108). The CASAPC will be further introduced in a case study later in this chapter.

Other major top-down health organizations act in the same way as the CASAPC does. The CPMA was also engaged in multiple projects for AIDS prevention and control, including the Global Fund and the China-Gates Foundation projects. In conducting these projects, it has also established close relationships with grassroots AIDS organizations and sometimes served as a platform to connect them to the government. Since 2015, it has started to directly manage the state-established China AIDS Fund for Nongovernmental Organizations, which improved its status in the health field. Like the CASAPC, however, the CPMA has no record of initiating policies regarding HIV/AIDS. In its long history, the only policy initiative it has consistently made is national tobacco control legislation. Since 2018, the CPMA has started to enact group industrial

standards. Yet, none of these standards publicized involves AIDS prevention and treatment.¹⁶

The CFPSA mainly conducts various projects for AIDS prevention and control. As a foundation, it can raise funds by itself instead of competing for national and international funding sources. Accordingly, it is less affected by international organizations. Although it also cooperates with grassroots AIDS organizations, their relationships are not as close as those of the CASAPC and the CPMA. It rarely held forums or conferences that could serve as platforms to connect grassroots organizations with the government. The CFPSA seldom participated in policy meetings held by relevant agencies. It neither brought forward any policy initiatives.

It is also the case for the CFHPC, which raises funds by itself and conducts projects to prevent and control hepatitis. Sometimes it engaged in academic research and relevant activities. Unlike official AIDS organizations introduced above, the CFHPC does not establish stable relationships with grassroots organizations. According to Yu Fangqiang, former general coordinator of Yirenping, the CFHPC intentionally kept its distance from grassroots organizations. It feared what Yirenping had done and cut off their previous slight connection.¹⁷ The CFHPC has been an infrequent participant in policymaking. In recent years, it put forward several policy initiatives. For example, in 2015 and 2016, it submitted policy proposals regarding access to drugs for Hepatitis B and C to the MOHRSS, the State Council, and the NPC.¹⁸ In addition, the professional opinions of medical experts related to the CFHPC sometimes influenced relevant policies, albeit they might not act under the name of the CFHPC. Compared with active state corporatist organizations, however, the CFHPC has no plans to influence policies and does not make regular and consistent efforts to influence policies.

¹⁶ The CPMA publicized its approved standards list every year on its website at <http://www.cpmo.org.cn>. After searching all these lists, no standard regarding HIV/AIDS was found.

¹⁷ The author's interview with Yu Fangqiang, then general coordinator of Yirenping, on Mar. 31, 2010, in Beijing.

¹⁸ 2015 and 2016 annual reports of the CFHPC.

The CSBT played a marginal role in the health system after its founding in 1988. The state started strengthening this organization after the “blood disaster” emerged in the late 1990s. The CSBT has since participated in AIDS prevention and control. Like other top-down health organizations, it mainly conducted projects using international and domestic funds while failing to represent the interests of victims of the “blood disaster” and influence AIDS policies. However, the CSBT differs from other AIDS organizations because it gradually gained the status of an industrial association in the trade of blood transfusion and blood products. In addition to academic research and communication, technological support and training, and mobilizing blood donation, it has opportunities to participate in more policy activities. Directed by the MOH, the CSBT conducted a few policy-related surveys and drafted primary industrial standards. Sometimes, it joined the MOH to inspect blood safety. Designated by the MOH, it participated in revising the Blood Donation Law in 2012 and conducted research on evaluating the law in 2017.¹⁹ However, like the CFHPC, the CSBT only occasionally put forward policy initiatives in its long history. In 2007 and 2009, it proposed nucleic acid tests for blood safety to the MOH. In 2019, it sent the National Medical Products Administration²⁰ a proposal to reclassify the blood component separator used by blood stations.

3.2.2 Bottom-up Organizations

3.2.2.1 AIDS Organizations

As introduced before, the founders of non-group-based AIDS organizations consist of two kinds of persons—AIDS activists and persons having backgrounds in China’s health system. Although the latter usually has some official backgrounds, the establishment of those organizations

¹⁹ Work report of the sixth board of directors of the CSBT and 2017 annual report of the CSBT.

²⁰ In 2003, State Food and Drug Administration, which will be mentioned later in this chapter, was established. In 2013, it was upgraded to China Food and Drug Administration. In 2018, this agency was downgraded to National Medical Products Administration under the newly established State Administration for Market Regulation. The latter took over its authority of food safety supervision. For convenience, this research uses “SFDA” to represent different stages of this agency.

was not based on official initiatives; therefore, they are still classified as bottom-up organizations. However, these are two distinct groups in terms of policy influence. Organizations by AIDS activists are active in influencing policies with moderate achievements, while organizations by persons from the health system show little interest in policy issues in the AIDS field and have not taken visible actions to influence policies.

Both the Homeland of Love in Beijing YouAn Hospital and the Home of Red Ribbon in Beijing Ditan Hospital were created by sympathetic doctors and nurses and focus on AIDS care, treatment, and education. A legal aid center is under the Home of Red Ribbon, but it has no visible activities. Likewise, Sunshine Doctors also comprises AIDS doctors and aims to provide voluntary medical services to PLWHA living in poor regions. These organizations are not interested in policy affairs and take no actions to influence policies. They usually are not invited by the government to attend policy-related meetings, either. As the head of the Homeland of Love showed, “we focus on specific work and do not engage in advocacy, which is not our objective.” She further explained that “the AIDS policies in our country are already good enough, so what we need to do is to implement them.”²¹

Some other organizations in this group seem to be staying away from AIDS policy affairs intentionally. CHAIN has served as a major HIV/AIDS information provider since its founding. However, it never made remarks on policy issues. There was a column called “remarks on hot issues” on its website before 2006. The articles in the column were all written by authors outside CHAIN, and the column has disappeared since 2006. Holding a neutral position is one of its four organizational tenets. Accordingly, there was a sentence underneath every news report of CHAIN: all the news reports on www.chain.net.cn are transferred from elsewhere and do not represent our

²¹ The author’s interview with the head of the Homeland of Love on Jun. 30, 2010, in Beijing.

standpoint. Since registering Chaoyang Kangzhong with the Chaoyang Bureau of Civil Affairs in 2005, CHAIN has obtained legal status and extended its business to providing substantial services to the HIV/AIDS community and the public. Nevertheless, like CHAIN, Chaoyang Kangzhong maintains a neutral position to avoid debates, making it hardly engage in influencing policies. Although Wang Ruotao, founder of CHAIN and Chaoyang Kangzhong, sometimes participated in policy discussions as a medical expert, he rarely used the names of these two organizations. In contrast to CHAIN, ThinkTank Research Center for Health Development makes it a major task to provide counseling services to the government for policymaking, which is revealed by “ThinkTank” in its name. With its official background and support from numerous public health experts, it has influenced policies in multiple public health areas, including SARS, the safety of injections, tobacco control, and injury prevention. The organization especially makes persistent efforts to advocate for tobacco control and tries to influence relevant policies at both local and national levels. In 2009, it even confronted the Shanghai World Expo Coordination Bureau to demand them to return the donation of a tobacco company. When it comes to the area of HIV/AIDS, however, the organization becomes silent on policy issues. It focuses on conducting projects in which it only provides services such as behavioral intervention in high-risk groups and technical support. The inherently sensitive nature of HIV/AIDS issues may explain the cautious stance of these organizations. To sustain their status within the health system, these medical experts choose to circumvent sensitive and complicated policy issues in this area by focusing on service provision.

In contrast, some non-group-based organizations created by AIDS activists are well known to international researchers and observers for their independent standing and intrepid efforts in HIV/AIDS combat, which made them highly politicized and subject to political pressures.

Wan Yanhai’s Aizhixing serves as a typical example within this group. Aizhixing committed

to influencing policies since its establishment and became an aggressive organization in the field. Aizhixing sought to influence all the crucial legislation in the field of public health by submitting their proposals and calling for legislative transparency, such as the Regulations on the Prevention and Treatment of AIDS, the Mental Hygiene Law, the Regulations on the Sanitary Administration of Public Spaces, and the Provisions for Drug Registration. According to Wan Yanhai and Jiang Tianyong, former coordinator of Aizhixing's legal program, Aizhixing usually did not influence policies through official organizations such as the CASAPC because they could hardly represent ordinary people in the AIDS community, although Aizhixing maintained mediocre relationships with these organizations.²² Aizhixing might have opportunities to communicate with government officials at conferences held by itself or other organizations. However, the government seldom invited Aizhixing to attend its policy meetings.²³

Aizhixing paid attention to almost all aspects of AIDS prevention and treatment and responded promptly after any significant events in the AIDS field. For example, Guangzhou police detained some MSM in a park on March 30 and April 3, 2009. Only two days later, Aizhixing wrote letters to the Public Security Bureau of Guangzhou and the NCAIDS to express its discontent. Following the model of Act Up, a U.S.-based international AIDS organization founded in 1987, the outstanding feature of Aizhixing's work is the accentuation of human rights, which has made the organization highly politicized in the eyes of the authorities. In 1999, Aizhixing helped Dr. Gao Yaojie disclose the Henan AIDS crisis. In 2002, Wan Yanhai was detained for over a month after he released a secret report about the AIDS epidemic in Henan (Kaufman 2010, 72; Yu 2011, 77-78; Wang 2021, 173). In 2007 when the NPC publicly solicited opinions on the draft of the Employment Promotion Law, Aizhixing submitted proposals to the NPC suggesting equal rights

²² The author's interview with Wan Yanhai and Jiang Tianyong on Mar. 5, 2010, in Beijing.

²³ The author's interview with Rayile, then coordinator of Aizhixing's advocacy program, on Mar. 9, 2010, in Beijing.

to employment for homosexuals and all patients. In 2008, it initiated a movement to support same-sex marriage. Aizhixing persistently advocated for compensation to victims of the “blood disaster” and holding the government accountable. In addition, it expressed sympathy and support to many AIDS petitioners/activists, such as Hu Jia, Tian Xi, and Li Xige (Wang 2021, 177). Sometimes Aizhixing even went beyond the AIDS field and involved itself in more politically sensitive issues. In 2006, it openly endorsed Chen Guangcheng²⁴, a politically sensitive figure in China. In 2008, it filed a complaint against Zhang Wenkang, former health minister, to the Supreme People’s Court. In 2010, Wan Yanhai was present at the award ceremony for Nobel Laureate Liu Xiaobo. These critical attitudes and actions incurred numerous pressures and harassment from the government. Wan Yanhai fled to the United States in 2010 to avoid possible severe punishment (Wan, 2010). He continued to direct the work of Aizhixing remotely. Several human rights lawyers, including Jiang Tianyong and Liu Wei, helped run the organization in China. In the following few years, Aizhixing maintained its working style. For example, to investigate the welfare of children affected by AIDS, it applied information disclosure to all provincial bureaus of civil affairs in 2013. Dissatisfied with 16 irresponsive bureaus, Aizhixing applied administrative reconsideration to their provincial governments. Based on these actions, it sent the MOCA a letter with policy proposals. Not surprisingly, government harassment and persecution continued.²⁵ In 2016-2017, Jiang Tianyong was arrested and sentenced to two years for inciting subversion of state power. Since then, Aizhixing has become dormant, although the government never officially shut it down.

²⁴ Chen Guangcheng is a blind amateur lawyer who advocated for women's rights, land rights, and the welfare of people experiencing poverty. He was imprisoned between 2006 and 2010 because of his challenging the implementation of the one-child policy but remained under house arrest at his home after that. He and his family members and relatives were abused severely during the period. In 2012, with the help of his friends, he dramatically escaped and fled to the U.S. Embassy in Beijing. After negotiations with the Chinese government, he was allowed to travel to the United States to study. Chen is a politically sensitive figure in China. His escape in 2012 triggered a diplomatic contention between China and the U.S.

²⁵ The author’s email interview with Wan Yanhai in Jan. 2011.

Because of the tension with the government, Aizhixing's specific policy proposals could hardly get a chance to be considered by policymakers, except for some experience-based research reports, such as a report based on its work among Uyghur migrants in Beijing (Yu 2011, 103-105).²⁶ However, its stance of defending human rights served as an alarm to the wrongdoings of the authorities and exerted pressures on policymakers (Wan et al. 2009, 22-23).

Li Dan, a former graduate student of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, is known for establishing schools for AIDS orphans in Henan Province in China's early years of combating HIV/AIDS. The COAP was an extension of the schools. Because of high-profile exposure by domestic and foreign media invited by Li Dan, the COAP was loathed by the local governments of Shangqiu and Kaifeng in Henan Province. After conflicting with local governments for several years, all its projects in Henan Province were forced to close in 2007. In the process, Li Dan was detained several times. As a response, Li and other activists organized protests, petitioned the central government in Beijing, and tried to rally the national media to their side (Hatch 2014, 49). Unfortunately, all these actions turned out to be unfruitful. With only one office in Beijing, the COAP conducted education projects for youth and college students and behavioral intervention in CSW. It also ran the Weiqian AIDS Legal Center to provide legal aid to PLWHA, especially those infected by blood-related activities or products. After conflicting with local governments, the COAP changed its attitude toward the state and worked differently. It not only intentionally avoided further conflicts but sought cooperation with the government. Li Dan told a reporter in November 2006 that "we are here to do things so that we must look for all the opportunities to act as a lubricant between the government and the society rather than jumping out for a duel, or we

²⁶ The author's interview with Wan Yanhai on Mar. 5, 2010, in Beijing.

can do nothing.”²⁷ Accordingly, the COAP adjusted its way of influencing policies. For example, it conducted research on HIV/AIDS victims via blood transfusion and designed a scheme for governmental compensation in 2010-11. Instead of releasing these through the media, Li Dan contributed them to the symposium held by the China Red Ribbon Beijing Forum in July 2011. In November 2011, for another example, the COAP stopped a plan to provide legal training to PLWHA petitioners from Henan after the government asked it to do so. The COAP usually avoided mobilizing the AIDS community to influence policies. Although it occasionally joined signature campaigns launched by other organizations, it never initiated such campaigns.²⁸ In 2012, Li Dan announced the COAP transformed into an NGO focusing on human rights education. Surprisingly, he diverted the organization to promoting women’s rights through artistic activities. In this new area, the COAP no longer sought to influence policies. Unfortunately, it turned out that this transition derailed the organization. Despite Li Dan’s achievements in the new area, the COAP has ceased working since 2016.

Loving Source was established by Hu Jia, a famous dissident in China, and his wife, Zeng Jinyan, in 2004. Hu Jia was sentenced to three years and six months imprisonment under the name of inciting subversion of the state power and was nominated as a candidate for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2008. Hu and Zeng quit Loving Source in 2006—Zeng remained as the organization’s legal representative—to ensure other members’ and volunteers’ security and the organization’s survival and operation. Under the leadership of their partner, Cheng Xiangyang, Loving Source conducted a series of activities in AIDS education and caring for children affected by HIV/AIDS. It also assisted PLWHA in acquiring second-line drugs. Loving Source generally provided services

²⁷ <http://news.sina.com.cn/c/2006-11-17/232511547018.shtml>, accessed Mar. 2, 2010.

²⁸ The author’s interview with Xu Haibo, then director of the COAP’s Weiqian AIDS Legal Center, on Mar. 15, 2010, in Beijing.

rather than sought to influence policies.²⁹ Although it intentionally avoided politics, pressures and harassment from various governmental organs never stopped. In November 2010, Zeng closed Loving Source to avoid further persecution.

The GFWI was created by Jia Ping, a lawyer and AIDS activist, in 2007. It was dedicated to making observations and comments on the activities of the Global Fund to push forward the participation of social organizations in the governance of the Global Fund and the field of HIV/AIDS. Jia Ping was the first representative of the CCM (Country Coordinating Mechanism)³⁰ “community-based organizations or other nongovernmental organizations” and played an important role in the second representative election in 2006-07. The GFWI also researched the discrimination against PLWHA and homosexuals, intellectual property laws, and access to ARV drugs. It designed a social compensation mechanism for people infected by HIV-contaminated blood and introduced it at the China Red Ribbon Beijing Forum in July 2011. Thanks to the invitation from a CASS expert with a solid official background, Jia was involved in this issue. Because Jia held an eclectic plan, which excluded blood donors and suggested compensations without fault confirmation, Wan Yanhai resisted this mechanism drastically and mobilized infected blood donors to paralyze the mechanism. Jia admitted his long discrepancy with Wan and confirmed his intention to establish a constructive relationship with the government.³¹ Compared to other organizations created by AIDS activists, the GFWI always took a softer stance and had no record of confronting the state directly. For example, it conducted projects in Harbin and Xi’an, training AIDS and MSM organizations to deal with state-organization relationships and reduce conflicts with the government.³² As China’s HIV/AIDS cases tended to be stable and economic

²⁹ The author’s email interview with Cheng Xiangyang in Aug. 2010. Cheng is a family member of PLWHA.

³⁰ The Global Fund has a mandated governance mechanism requiring the establishment of CCM with civil society representatives to review, approve, and submit applications. See Wang (2021, 178-180).

³¹ The author’s interview with Jia Ping on Mar. 24, 2012, in Beijing.

³² Ibid.

capabilities grew more robust, many international donors began to wind down funding and finally terminated their assistance to China. Since the withdrawal of the Global Fund in 2014³³, Jia Ping transformed the GFWI into the Public Health Governance Project and expanded its research to a broad range of legal and policy issues in public health. As an expert in this field, Jia became a board member of the CASAPC and often participated in its AIDS academic conferences. However, his influence on public health policies is still limited. The GFWI and its successor have no significant policy achievements to date. The state has shelved the social compensation mechanism mentioned above and the issue of compensation to HIV-contaminated blood victims.

Most group-based AIDS organizations conduct their activities within specific geographical communities. These community organizations usually do not take action to influence policies, although they are sympathetic to their constituents and may have the willingness to do so (Miller 2013, 235-244). In general, they exert little influence on AIDS policies. This study investigates four such community organizations in Beijing: two PLWHA groups, one MSM group, and one organization for drug users. None of them is found to be an active policy advocate.

Beijing Health Together is a community PLWHA group near Ditan Hospital. Its main activity is caring for HIV-positive persons using funds provided by the Global Fund and the ITPC HIV Collaborative Fund. According to Ji Feng, the head of the group, the organization has little communication with the MOH and the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Health. Officials of China CDC or Beijing CDC often refused the group's invitations under various excuses. Their group maintains good relationships with the CASAPC and its Beijing branch. It also relies on The Home of Red Ribbon to introduce patients. Ji Feng felt that policy-related actions might offend doctors, hospitals, official organizations, and governments. Therefore, he seldom touched on policy issues,

³³ In addition to the economic strength of China, the Global Fund withdrew from China because it was disappointed with the Chinese government's inefficient work and misused funds (Wang 2021, 182-183).

and when he did, he was very cautious of the degree and wording. Occasionally, Ji Feng mentioned such problems as the rejection of surgeries for PLWHA and the mandatory test of HIV in the recruitment of civil servants at some meetings. He also passed his words to the Beijing CDC and the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Health through the CASAPC's Beijing branch. However, he felt it was useless because nothing had been changed.³⁴ The other community organization of PLWHA is the Sunshine Health Community, which relies on Beijing CDC for projects and resources. It conducts education among HIV-positive persons to prevent further virus transmission and facilitates Beijing CDC for VCT. Gao Fei, the head of the group, showed he advocated for anti-discrimination of PLWHA when he sat in the training sessions for lower-level CDCs and hospitals. However, he admitted his major work was to assist the Beijing CDC, and he could hardly conduct policy-related activities facing such constraints as funds, staff, and time.³⁵

Beijing Zuo You Center, formerly known as Beijing Tongxing Working Group, is an MSM community group. Like similar community groups, it mainly conducts behavioral intervention in MSM using domestic and foreign funds. Sun Bin, the vice head of the group, showed they were willing to advocate for gay marriage, but they did not act. If somebody organized signature campaigns for gay marriage, they would like to participate. Because they conducted projects targeting MSW (male sex workers), they mentioned the decriminalization of sex workers at some meetings. In general, they were not engaged in policy affairs because they were short of legal experts and could not conduct research and hold symposiums. As a result, they could hardly formulate systematic policy proposals and submit them to the government.³⁶

Yi Xian Xi Wang was established by several drug users and their family members in Beijing

³⁴ The author's interview with Ji Feng on Sep. 13, 2010, in Beijing.

³⁵ The author's interview with Gao Fei on Sep. 13, 2010, in Beijing.

³⁶ The author's interview with Sun Bin on Sep. 9, 2010, in Beijing.

in 2008. With more professional volunteers joining the team, it expanded its services from consulting to behavioral intervention and social work. It works closely with local agencies and organizations dealing with detoxification. In 2018, it officially registered with the Beijing Bureau of Civil Affairs under the name of Beijing Social Health Social Work Service Center. Since 2012, it has conducted HIV/AIDS projects for drug users using international and domestic funds. One brand project is to extend social work to a methadone clinic in Fengtai District. Although it has some access to relevant government agencies, it has no record of influencing policies.

In contrast to these community organizations, many developed national group-based organizations show great interest in influencing policies and take visible policy-related actions to defend the interests of their constituencies. Although they cannot fully achieve their goals all the time, their efforts have generated some favorable results for them. More importantly, some organizations in this group acted more aggressively to influence policies. As Meng Lin put it, “the advocacy of PLWHA has some advantage over that of outsiders like Wan Yanhai, because the government is more tolerant of PLWHA.”³⁷

Meng Lin established the Ark of Love in 2004 and the CAP+ in 2006. The latter was a coalition of about 50 PLWHA groups across the country. Meng served multiple times as the PLWHA sector representative or the CBO (community-based organizations)/NGO sector representative in the CCM of the Global Fund, making him an influential national leader of PLWHA. Under his leadership, the Ark of Love and the CAP+ had been active in influencing policies regarding the availability of ARV drugs, care and economic assistance to PLWHA, medical and employment discrimination against PLWHA, and the exposure of their privacy (Meng, 2009).

In 2010, the CAP+ conducted a nationwide survey regarding the treatment and life of PLWHA

³⁷ The author’s interview with Meng Lin on Jun. 24, 2010, in Beijing.

in cooperation with the China Population Welfare Foundation and some experts at Renmin University. The resulting report published in 2012 exposed many problems and was widely cited. According to the report, the CAP+ took a series of actions to influence relevant policies. Some of these efforts succeeded, while others failed. For example, it facilitated a CPPCC member submitting a proposal in 2012 to revise Article 18 of the General Standard of Physical Examination for the Recruitment of Civil Servants and matching operational guidance, which explicitly excludes PLWHA. The following year, it sent an open letter to the NPC and three relevant agencies after collecting signatures in the AIDS community. However, when the standard was revised in 2016, the article remained untouched. For another example, in 2013, the CAP+ launched a media campaign to oppose Measures for the Administration of the Bathing Industry drafted by the Ministry of Commerce because the departmental rule prohibits PLWHA from entering public baths. Eventually, the ministry shelved the legislation. Provided that the Chinese state dominated the Global Fund application, disbursement, and implementation process, grassroots social organizations could hardly obtain sufficient funds. In 2010, Meng Lin wrote a letter to the Secretariat of the Global Fund complaining about the insufficiency of funds and the unfairness of the distribution. This letter led to an earthquake in China's AIDS field: The Global Fund froze all the grants to China in May 2011. The incident forced the Chinese government to respond quickly. Chen Zhu, then minister of the MOH, met representatives of grassroots organizations, including Meng Lin, twice in May and June to inquire about their demands. Chen also presided over a national video-phone conference to arrange an inspection of all Global Fund projects throughout the country. Three months later, these grants were restored under the condition that the Chinese government promised to increase funds allocated to grassroots organizations and launch a reform series (Wang 2021, 180-181). The CDC started a new procedure to elect an SR to manage social

organizations' budgets and reinforce capacity building. However, in February 2012, the CCM stopped the procedure and appointed the CASAPC as the SR, which the Global Fund approved. Meng Lin's CAP+ lost the battle, although it successfully turned the spotlight on the issue of grassroots participation.

In 2013, Meng Lin and a few AIDS organization leaders proposed a mechanism for CBOs' participation after the withdrawal of the Global Fund. Unfortunately, most proposals were not adopted when the government set up the China AIDS Fund for Nongovernmental Organizations in 2015. After that, the government integrated different international aid sources under an official funding mechanism and created a unified single channel to distribute resources to AIDS NGOs (Wang 2021, 186). The mechanisms and institutions built to channel civil society demands to the health authorities in policymaking were quietly replaced by a government committee that excluded the participation of grassroots organizations (Huang 2019, 641). Although collaborations between the state, top-down organizations, and grassroots organizations could still deliver satisfactory health services, the collaboration strategies remain state-centered, and more cooperating grassroots organizations become visible (Wu and Liu 2019, 18-19; Ren and Gui 2024, 115-117). Most AIDS organizations worked under the government's plan and were no longer interested in rights protection, legal advocacy, or participating in AIDS policy (Wang 2021, 187). As Meng Lin admitted, the government favored obedient organizations instead of those pursuing independence, like the Ark of Love and the CAP+.³⁸ As a result, the Ark of Love and the CAP+ could not acquire sufficient funds after the retreat of international funding. Both organizations have entered dormancy since 2015. Meng Lin retired in 2018. Up to 2020, he kept the record of China's longest-surviving HIV-positive person.³⁹

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ See two media reports at <http://news.sina.com.cn/s/sd/2018-02-05/doc-ifyrhcqv8550933.shtml> and

Birch Woods National Alliance of PLWHA (Birch Woods) was created by Bai Hua, an HIV-positive person, in 2011. Using multiple social networking applications, it reaches out to thousands of HIV-positive people and their family members across the country. In cooperation with the CDC, the CASAPC, and designated hospitals for HIV/AIDS, Birch Woods serves as a platform for communication and support, including VCT, drug information, medical and psychological counseling, and education in high-risk groups. In addition to providing services, it identifies issues such as drug availability, medical and employment discrimination, and privacy exposure and communicates with authorities to solve these problems. Sometimes, it also submitted policy proposals through sympathetic NPC representatives and CPPCC members.⁴⁰ Birch Woods actively represents the interests of patients. For example, in February 2020, it jointly conducted an online survey with UNAIDS regarding the prevention of COVID-19 in HIV-positive persons and drug availability during lockdowns. Accordingly, they urged the CDC to guarantee their treatments in these unprecedented times. However, compared to the CAP+, Birch Woods takes a milder stance in influencing policies. It avoids drastically criticizing the government and mobilizing the HIV/AIDS community to pressure the government. Although it sometimes joined signature campaigns launched by other organizations or individuals, it never initiated such campaigns. In 2016, the personal information of many HIV-positive persons was suddenly leaked for unidentified reasons, and they were scammed and hurt. Meng Lin blamed the CDC system and criticized mandatory real-name tests and registration implemented in multiple provinces, while Birch Woods only collected information and delivered it to the CDC.⁴¹

Created by Li Xiang in 2001, the MSG was the first PLWHA organization in China. In its

https://www.thepaper.cn/newsDetail_forward_3035901, accessed Aug. 1, 2020.

⁴⁰ See its online introduction on the China Development Brief at <http://www.chinadevelopmentbrief.org.cn/org1986>, accessed Aug. 3, 2020.

⁴¹ See an online report at <https://chuansongme.com/n/447130543167>, accessed Aug. 3, 2020.

early years, the MSG trained 26 PLWHA groups and cultivated many PLWHA activists. Just like the CAP+, the MSG also advocated for anti-discrimination in medical and public institutions, access to ARV drugs, the governance of the Global Fund, and capacity building of grassroots organizations. Because Li Xiang is one of the earliest live patients, the MSG maintained a good relationship with the government and was often invited to attend various meetings, including some policy-related ones. Every time Li expressed his opinions and made some suggestions. However, there was little feedback, so Li needed to know whether his suggestions had been adopted. Li mentioned he was once invited to a meeting to discuss a document draft, but he never heard about follow-ups. After a long time, he was curious to know if the government had finished the draft of the document or not.⁴² The MSG usually influenced policies via face-to-face contact with government officials. In rare cases, it collected signatures and sent letters to relevant authorities advocating for drug access and anti-discrimination. The MSG avoided radical ways to influence policies. Li Xiang admitted he never blamed government officials at any meetings. As a result, the government gave the MSG opportunities to express its opinions and tolerated some mild criticisms. For example, Li published an article in *Legal Daily* criticizing the closed legislative process of the Regulations on the Prevention and Treatment of AIDS. The article failed to promote grassroots participation in the legislative process; it neither caused any trouble for the MSG.⁴³ In 2014, Li Xiang closed the MSG for personal reasons. After that, he only published articles through self-media to improve social understanding of PLWHA.

ITPC-China⁴⁴ is a network-style organization created by PLWHA activists from different provinces in 2006. Thomas took the place of Zhou Ji to serve as the general coordinator of the

⁴² The author's interview with Li Xiang on Jun. 29, 2010, in Beijing.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ According to the author's interviews with Zhou Ji on Sep. 10, 2010, and Thomas on Dec. 24, 2010, the ITPC-China has some connections with the ITPC, but the relationship is loose. It accepts the ITPC's spirits and some strategies rather than its directives.

network. He is also the founder of AIDS Care China, a large PLWHA organization conducting activities in Guangdong, Guangxi, Yunnan, Sichuan, and Hubei. Since 2016, it has further extended services to Laos and Cambodia. From the outset, ITPC-China's activists began to influence policies actively. Their actions concentrate on ARV drugs and HIV/AIDS treatment. For example, ITPC-China launched a movement in July 2006 to stop the State Intellectual Property Office (SIPO) from granting a patent to Gilead's Tenofovir (TDF)—a critical ARV drug—and succeeded eventually. From 2008, ITPC-China made continual efforts with other health organizations to push forward issuing compulsory licenses for domestic production of lamivudine (3TC), an ARV drug used for both first-line and second-line regimens. This chapter will introduce this case in detail later. In 2010, the MOH planned to carry out a policy to shed the responsibility of AIDS treatment to lower-level medical institutions. ITPC-China conducted a nationwide survey and found that more than 80% of PLWHA disagreed with the plan. After submitting a report to the MOH, it received feedback from the MOH, manifesting that the policy would be postponed. In 2013, ITPC-China launched a campaign to phase out d4T, an ARV drug causing severe side effects, and supported a relevant lawsuit in Shandong Province. In 2014-15, it prevented the SIPO from granting a patent to Gilead's Sofosbuvir, a medication used to treat hepatitis C, a common infection in AIDS patients. In recent years, Thomas focused on his service-oriented work in AIDS Care China and seriously reduced the activities of ITPC-China. ITPC-China had no policy actions since 2015.

He Tiantian created the Dandelion Online Network for Women Living with HIV/AIDS in 2007. Composed of 21 women's AIDS groups across the country, it was the first national network for female PLWHA in China. In the same year, the network participated in ITPC-China's

movement advocating for access to TDF by collecting signatures.⁴⁵ He Tiantian organized the WNAC based on this network in 2009. It gradually incorporated six more member organizations later. Since the beginning, it has set a goal of advocating for gender-sensitive AIDS policies and measures. During the preparations for its founding, the WNAC started a signature campaign to demand a female representative in relevant CCM committees.⁴⁶ Although the campaign was not successful, two of four amendments it offered to revise the CCM guidelines on gender equity issues were approved (Wells-Dang 2012, 101). The next year, the WNAC attended the first session of the China Red Ribbon Beijing Forum, and He Tiantian was invited as a member of the forum's Interim Steering Committee. She advocated for anti-discrimination of PLWHA, especially women affected by HIV/AIDS, at the forum. Since then, multiple network members presented at the forum advocating for various issues, such as care for HIV-positive women, compensation for blood-related infections, and the difficulty of medical treatments for HIV carriers.

The WNAC became even more aggressive after Yuan Wenli took over the management of the network. In 2011, it sent an open letter with signatures from the AIDS community to the MOH and the ACWF, calling for official intervention in the event of treatment refusal encountered by a burnt HIV-positive woman in Guangdong Province. In 2012, it collected signatures again to persuade the MOH and the CDC to popularize the usage of female condoms. In 2013, it joined other AIDS organizations to oppose Measures for the Administration of the Bathing Industry by sending a letter to the Ministry of Commerce. The following year, it finished a shadow report for the CEDAW review, which called for state actions to facilitate women and children affected by HIV/AIDS. In addition to these policy-related actions, the WNAC conducted a series of nationwide surveys, including a survey in 2013 of medical discrimination against HIV-positive women, a survey in

⁴⁵ The author's online interviews with He Tiantian on Jul. 21 and 22, 2010.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

2017 of domestic violence against HIV-positive women, and a survey in 2018 of employment discrimination against all HIV carriers. Based on these surveys, it put forward such policy proposals as reforming the system of designated medical facilities for AIDS patients, integrating anti-domestic violence into AIDS prevention and treatment, and revising the General Standard of Physical Examination for the Recruitment of Civil Servants.

Because of its somewhat aggressive working style, the WNAC once suffered from pressures from the state. Yuan Wenli and Wang Qiuyun, two leaders of the WNAC, were prohibited from traveling abroad when they intended to attend international conferences in 2013 and 2014, respectively. After these incidents, it adjusted its working style by stopping provocative actions such as signature campaigns and directly sending letters to government officials. It seems the change has ensured its survival. It maintained a good relationship with the official system in the following years. For example, funded by the CASAPC, it conducted a survey project in rural areas regarding the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV in 2018. In the previous year, Yuan Wenli was invited by the CDC to participate in a relevant investigation.⁴⁷

Since the MOH admitted the importance of MSM in AIDS prevention and started behavioral intervention in this group at the end of 2004, numerous organizations sprung up throughout the country. Most of these organizations began to provide HIV/AIDS-related services to receive state funding and improve social status (Chua and Hildebrandt, 2014; Cao and Guo, 2016; Ren and Gui 2024, 105-106; Wortham 2024, 121-122). However, various problems arose, such as insufficient capacity, devastating competition for resources, and cleavages along geographical locations, opinions, and factions (Hildebrandt, 2012; Miller 2013, 257-328). The CMTHF was established by some leading MSM organizations in response to these problems in October 2008. Since its

⁴⁷ See a report on one of its micro-blogging sites at https://www.weibo.com/3187944742/wenzhang?is_article=1, accessed Aug. 11, 2020.

founding, the CMTHF made efforts to integrate the MSM community and influence policies to defend the interests of MSM organizations. For example, in July 2008, when some MSM groups were preparing to establish the CMTHF, they expressed discontent with the CDC about the ongoing large-scale epidemiological survey among MSM. They complained that some local CDCs left aside or broke up existing MSM organizations. Tong Ge wrote three letters to Wu Zunyou, director of the NCAIDS. The CDC responded quickly by meeting with representatives of MSM organizations and sending task forces to supervise the operation of the survey. As a consequence, many problems were corrected. In October 2009, for another example, the CDC formulated a self-beneficial mechanism to manage MSM organizations in the entire nation. Representing the CMTHF, Tong Ge drastically opposed this mechanism and proposed his own mechanism the following month. Eventually, the MOH postponed the CDC mechanism.⁴⁸ As the chief expert of the Beijing Gender Health Education Institute, a hybrid grassroots organization with both homosexual and straight people, Tong Ge used this platform to conduct a series of research on China's MSM community. The government adopted many research proposals, laying the groundwork for behavioral intervention among MSM in China.⁴⁹ The CMTHF had several policy actions in the next few years. In 2011 and 2012, it advocated for further participation of MSM organizations in AIDS prevention and control at multiple meetings.⁵⁰ In 2013, it joined other organizations to oppose Measures for the Administration of the Bathing Industry. In cooperation with Meng Lin and other organizational leaders, Tong Ge drafted the CBOs' participation mechanism after the withdrawal of the Global Fund. Unfortunately, the CMTHF could not obtain sufficient funds after the retreat of international funding for the same dilemma the Ark of Love and

⁴⁸ Tong Ge presented both cases to the author during an interview on Aug. 2, 2010, in Beijing.

⁴⁹ The author's interview with Tong Ge on Aug. 2, 2010, and the author's interview with the director of Beijing Gender Health Education Institute on Aug. 24, 2010, in Beijing.

⁵⁰ See Tong Ge's blogging site at <http://tongge2005.blog.sohu.com>, accessed May 2, 2013.

the CAP+ encountered. As a result, Tong Ge left the CMTHE, and the organization has since become dormant.

As the most prominent group-based organization for CSW, the CWRW actively advocated anti-discrimination and the legalization of sex workers. In 2010, when the police of the whole nation were launching a strike-hard campaign to sweep out the sex industry and sex workers, members and volunteers of the CWRW went on the streets of Wuhan to display performance art and collect signatures both on the street and on the internet for supporting the legalization of sex workers. This direct confrontation was suppressed, and Ye Haiyan was “invited” by the police for a “vacation.” Ye also emphasized human rights in HIV/AIDS prevention and control. She went to Beijing multiple times to care for Henan AIDS petitioners and conduct surveys among them. In addition, Ye identifies herself as a feminist. She even put forward the idea of establishing the China Women’s Party.

What the CWRW advocated and its inclination toward political confrontation led to a series of repression. In 2011, the CWRW was forced to leave Wuhan. Ye Haiyan moved her organization to Guangxi, and commercially registered as Duckweed Health Service Workshop, through which she continued behavioral intervention and care in CSW. During this period, the organization surveyed low-paid “ten yuan” sex workers. In May 2013, Ye conducted quasi-performance art in front of an elementary school in Wanning, Hainan Province. She aimed to arouse social awareness of sexual offenses against minors, which the principal of that elementary school had just committed. Many people followed suit, and critical reports and discussions flooded the media. Ye was assaulted and involved in a criminal case when returning to Guangxi. After 13 days in detention, Ye was compelled to close her organization and move to Wuhan, her birthplace. Many believed the government manipulated the event behind the scenes. Since 2014, Wuhan police have withheld

her passport to prevent her from going abroad. Ye kept close contact with Feminist Voices and the YFAG, although she had no chance to participate in their activities directly. In 2015, she wrote articles through self-media to endorse the Feminist Five. In 2016, Ye moved to Songzhuang Town in Beijing to learn painting. Since then, she has made a living from self-media writing and selling her artworks and other small commodities. Although Ye cannot start or participate in any organizations, she maintains a critical attitude toward the state. For example, she condemned government wrongdoings during the outbreak of COVID-19 and called for systematic changes in February 2020.⁵¹ Therefore, she frequently suffers from various pressures from the state, such as suspending her self-media accounts, cutting off water and electricity services, and canceling her art exhibition. Like the YFAG activists, she must keep a low profile under these pressures.⁵²

3.2.2.2 Non-AIDS Organizations

As discussed above, some bottom-up AIDS organizations actively represent patients' interests and influence policies. Is this also the case outside the AIDS circle? This research finds that the two kinds of non-AIDS organizations—organizations for hepatitis and hemophilia—are also active in influencing public policies with moderate achievements, whether supported by a large or small patient community.

China has a massive community of HBV carriers who have faced discrimination in many aspects of life for a long time, such as education, employment, and marriage. In 2003-2004, the first anti-discrimination case in the field of HBV—Zhang Xianzhu vs. Wuhu Personnel Bureau—occurred in Anhui Province. An internet website, www.hbvhbv.com (named *Gandan Xiangzhao* in Chinese), provided legal aid to Zhang and launched a signature campaign to support him. Thanks

⁵¹ See her self-media article at <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/UpMiUDg6OeJTMl4iob-tlQ>, accessed Aug. 13, 2020.

⁵² See a report by Tong Chang at https://web.archive.org/web/20230807040500/https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/LzFui_X-3ea1pqvslEDAMg, accessed Aug. 7, 2023.

to media attention and public sympathy, Zhang eventually won the case. A website webmaster named Lu Jun played a vital role in the case. In 2006, he left the website and created the Beijing Yirenping Center.

In a short period, Yirenping became the leading organization in the field of hepatitis by training grassroots organizations and creating multiple networks within the community. Focusing on anti-discrimination and access to relevant drugs, it launched many campaigns to influence policies (Yu 2011, 105-110; Guo, 2013). Based on its research, Yirenping submitted proposals for many policies via multiple channels, such as NPC representatives/CPPCC members, citizen proposals, and opinion solicitation. These included the Employment Contracts Law, the Employment Promotion Law and its detailed rules for implementation, the Food Safety Law and its detailed rules for implementation, the Mental Health Law, Hygienic Standard for Swimming Places, Hygienic Regulations on Management of Nurseries and Kindergartens, Regulations on the Administration of Sanitation in Public Places, and the General Standard of Physical Examination for the Recruitment of Civil Servants. In 2009, when Yirenping heard the news that the MOHRSS, the MOE, and the MOH might jointly issue a regulatory document further protecting the education and employment rights of HBV carriers, it launched a media campaign to accelerate the process and formulated eight proposals for the document. The media and experts widely cited Yirenping's proposals, and they became the leading opinions of the grassroots. In February 2010, the document was promulgated, and some of Yirenping's proposals were adopted, including the penalty provisions for violations. Using its abundant legal resources, Yirenping filed or facilitated more than 200 influential lawsuits for various underprivileged people in different places in China (Fu, 2013). Many of these lawsuits received intense media coverage thanks to its systematic media management strategy (Tai 2015, 91-92). They became good examples for public education and

created legal precedents.⁵³ As Lu Jun (2021, 98) puts it, Yirenping's efforts had been successful. At least fifteen laws, regulations, and departmental rules were enacted or revised to eliminate education and employment discrimination against HBV carriers.

With its increasing influence, Yirenping entered other fields, such as AIDS, women, LGBTQ, and disabled persons, to provide services and influence policies. In 2006, 39 AIDS groups established the China HIV/AIDS CBO Network (CHCN). Aizhixing served as the first secretariat of the CHCN. Yirenping also played an essential role in the network's policy-related work. In 2008, Yirenping launched a campaign to advocate for the availability of lamivudine with other AIDS organizations. In 2011, it collected signatures of 1,084 disabled persons and their family members. It sent the signed letter to the State Administration of Civil Service, urging government agencies to recruit disabled persons for at least 1.5% of their employees. Since 2012, Yirenping established a close relationship with Feminist Voices and the YFAG by sponsoring many of their actions, including street activities. In 2013, it mobilized netizens to press local police to release Ye Haiyan. It was also an active advocate for enacting the Anti-domestic Violence Law. As introduced in Chapter Two, among the Feminist Five, Wu Rongrong worked for Yirenping, and Li Tingting served as its LGBTQ project manager. After they were detained in 2015, Yirenping immediately endorsed them and demanded the release of these activists. However, it turned out that Yirenping itself was one of the crackdown's targets. The police raided its office and forced it to shut down the same year. Fortunately, Lu Jun stayed in New York as a visiting scholar before the crackdown and avoided persecution.

From 2009, Yirenping sponsored its staff or volunteers to establish sister organizations in other cities to extend its influence and diversify the risk of maintaining a single headquarters in Beijing.

⁵³ The author's interview with Yu Fangqiang, then general coordinator of Yirenping, on Mar. 31, 2010, in Beijing.

For example, in 2009, Chang Boyang established Zhengzhou Yirenping in Zhengzhou, Henan Province; in 2011, Yu Fangqiang founded Tianxiagong in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province; Guo Bin and Yang Zhanqing created ACTogether in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province in 2013. Although these organizations were registered separately, they acted in similar fields and adopted similar operational approaches as Yirenping. Therefore, they all suffered from the state's violent suppression. In 2014, Chang Boyang was arrested once, and Zhengzhou Yirenping was forced to close. In 2015, Guo Bin and Yang Zhanqing were detained for a month, and ACTogether was forced to shut down. In the same year, Yu Fangqiang closed Tianxiagong. Lu Jun (2021, 101) recalls that "Between 2014 and 2019, in four separate crackdowns, nine of my colleagues were jailed, and five of our offices were repeatedly searched until they were shut down."

Compared with the community of hepatitis, the community of hemophilia is apparently smaller. However, fewer people do not necessarily mean a lower voice. Those living with hemophilia are no less active than HBV carriers in defending their interests and influencing public policies. Sometimes only a few people could also launch visible movements. The HHC is the first group-based hemophilia organization in China. Like Yirenping, it facilitated the establishment of local hemophilia groups and formed a nationwide network of people with hemophilia. The HHC itself was also a network-style organization with two principal leaders, Guan Tao and Chu Yuguang, in Beijing and other leaders in Tianjin, Guangdong, and Shanghai. Since its establishment, the HHC has become devoted to raising the visibility of hemophilia in the country and influencing policies regarding the availability and costs of drugs, health insurance, and social assistance to patients.

Because patients with hemophilia must regularly take drugs made from human blood, they have a higher chance of being affected by HIV/AIDS-related problems. In 1986, the Chinese

government banned the import of most blood products so that people with hemophilia must rely on domestic drugs. With the closedown of many blood stations causing HIV transmission, the available blood source dropped dramatically. As a result, Human Coagulation Factor VIII (FVIII), a popular medicine for people with hemophilia, became exceedingly rare and even unavailable in 2006-2007. The HHC, with the help of other health organizations such as Yirenping, launched a media campaign to expose the problem to the public eye, and it also launched several signature campaigns to seek support within the hemophilia community. It sent letters to the MOH, the State Food and Drug Administration (SFDA), the NDRC, and the State Council four times and encouraged patients across the country to send letters to these authorities. Consequently, the shortage of FVIII became a public event at that time. These actions exerted tremendous pressure on the government. Wu Yi, then vice premier, directed the SFDA to resolve the issue. The SFDA responded quickly by reallocating cryoprecipitate to FVIII producers and approving the entry of a genetic recombination FVIII, which ended the shortage of FVIII.⁵⁴ In 2010, the shortage of FVIII appeared again in some cities with lower prices of the drug. To request unified prices throughout the country, The HHC mobilized patients to fax the NDRC, which takes charge of drug prices. It also wrote a letter to Premier Wen Jiabao. Wen intervened in the issue, and the NDRC eventually unified the price.⁵⁵ In 2013, it sent a letter to Premier Li Keqiang and relevant agencies to resolve the shortage of FVIII for the third time. In 2011, The HHC settled the shortage of human prothrombin complex, another medication to treat hemophilia, by sending the MOH an open letter with patients' signatures and launching a media campaign.

The HHC also helped those hemophilia patients infected with HIV by taking drugs from contaminated blood claim compensation (Yu 2011, 100-103). Kong Delin, the Shanghai leader of

⁵⁴ The author's interview with Guan Tao, secretary general of the HHC, on May 30, 2010, in Beijing.

⁵⁵ Ibid. The NDRC eventually issued the policy document to unify the price in 2012.

the HHC, went on the street with those patients for a protest in 2005. Wang Lixin, the Tianjin leader of the HHC, organized multiple petitions and protests both in Tianjin and Beijing.⁵⁶ In fact, these local leaders represented a more radical wing of the HHC's leadership. In addition to these actions, the HHC made long-lasting efforts to advocate for covering their drugs in health insurance at both the national level and different localities. It submitted proposals to the NPC and the CPPCC in 2006 and to the Beijing Municipal CPPCC in 2010. It began to lobby the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Human Resources and Social Security to list hemophilia as a special outpatient illness in 2000 and eventually achieved the goal in 2010. The HHC also mobilized hemophilia patients in different locations to lobby their local governments for health insurance coverage. For example, Huang Zikai, the HHC's Guangdong leader, organized a few petitions and continuously mobilized patients to make phone calls to the local Bureau of Social Security. They eventually succeeded in 2006, setting a precedent for other provinces. By 2009, health insurance in most cities had covered hemophilia. From 2011, the HHC sent proposals to the MOH, the MOHRSS, the NPC, and the CPPCC multiple times, proposing listing all major hemophilia drugs in the Basic Medical Insurance Medicine Catalog, so patients with hemophilia B and rural patients with the New-Type Rural Cooperative Medical Insurance could be covered. It eventually achieved all its goals in 2017. By 2019, hemophilia had been the only rare disorder⁵⁷ that was covered by the National Critical Illness Insurance Program.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ According to the author's interview with Guan Tao, Kong Delin did not notify other leaders of the HHC before he participated in the protest, so he thought it could not be counted as a protest organized by the HHC. Likewise, many of Wang Lixin's activities were not based on the HHC's collective decisions.

⁵⁷ Hemophilia is commonly recognized as a rare disorder. Rare disorders are also called rare diseases. A rare disorder affects a small percentage of the population. According to the WHO, a rare disease is any disease that affects 0.65%- 1% of the population. In the U.S., it is defined as any disease that affects less than 200 thousand people or less than 1/1,500 of the U.S. population. However, there is no single, widely accepted definition for rare diseases in the world and in China. Chapter Five will further discuss it.

⁵⁸ See the HHC's self-introduction on its website at <http://www.xueyou.org/about.aspx>, accessed Aug. 16, 2020.

Two events from 2009 to 2012 changed the original trajectory of the HHC. Because of internal conflicts in the new leadership election, Kong Delin resigned in 2009.⁵⁹ Wang Lixin also resigned in 2011. From then on, the HHC excluded the radical wing from its leadership. In 2012, Chu Yuguang, Huang Zikai, and Guan Tao successfully registered the HHC with the Beijing Bureau of Civil Affairs under the name of Beijing Hemophilia Home Rare Disorder Care Center. Guan Tao became the president of the HHC later. In addition to influencing policies, the HHC conducts many projects to provide patients with various services using funds from domestic enterprises and foundations, including medical support, life assistance, patient education, and skills training. By doing so, it cooperates with some official organizations, such as the Capital Philanthropy Federation, affiliated with the Beijing Bureau of Civil Affairs, and has won their trust. It has gradually established good relationships with multiple government agencies at both local and national levels. The HHC and Guan Tao himself also won awards issued by the authorities. Accordingly, the HHC has adjusted its mode of policy influence. It abstains from street activities such as protests. It has also obviously stopped mobilizing patients to collect signatures, send letters, or make phone calls/faxes to governments. Because it has more opportunities to contact government officials face to face via venues like various conferences, activities, and mutual invitations, it has abandoned petitioning. Submitting proposals via sympathetic representatives/members to the NPC or the CPPCC becomes another regular way to influence policies. Although it maintains the method of sending letters to the authorities, it no longer collects signatures from patients on a large scale. For example, in 2014, it only collected the signatures of medical experts for a letter to the MOHRSS; in 2016, it sent another letter to the ministry under the names of its member organizations.⁶⁰ After registration, the HHC has strengthened its

⁵⁹ See a self-statement of the HHC on its website at http://www.xueyou.org/news_a_read.aspx?id=149, accessed Mar. 5, 2013.

⁶⁰ These letters are available on its website at http://www.xueyou.org/news_b_read.aspx?id=614 and

relationships with member organizations and individual patients. From 2014 to 2017, it conducted the first nationwide survey of the living conditions of hemophilia patients. From 2018 to 2019, it developed a national patient registration system and upgraded it to a mobile application. Its member organizations facilitated these activities. All member organizations generally follow the current policy influence mode of the HHC. Although some of them had small-scale petitions, no one organized or participated in confrontational mass incidents.⁶¹

3.2.2.3 Informal Organizations

As in the field of women's organizations, there are also informal cyber-based groups in health organizations. A search of 12 such websites, five for hepatitis and seven for HIV/AIDS, finds that the basic pattern is the same as that of women's organizations. All these websites popularize knowledge, while some provide care and life assistance to PLWHA and their family members. None of the HIV/AIDS websites has information on influencing policies, including www.chinaredribbon.com, which already conducted many offline activities. Several hepatitis websites with bulletin board systems (BBS), such as www.ganbaobao.com.cn, included some posts about defending the interests of HBV carriers. However, these posts were sporadic and swamped by the flood of other information.

Only one hepatitis website stood out as a platform for mobilizing people and influencing policies—www.hbvhbv.com⁶². As mentioned above, it cultivated Lu Jun and Yirenping. There was abundant policy-related information on the website, and some people collected signatures here and even called for writing letters or sending online messages to government officials, including Premier Wen Jiabao and Premier Li Keqiang. Feminist Voices and the YFAG also used this

http://www.xueyou.org/news_a_read.aspx?id=51, respectively, accessed Aug. 15, 2020.

⁶¹ See work reports of these member organizations at <http://www.xueyou.org/gdfc.aspx>, accessed Aug. 15, 2020.

⁶² It changed to <http://hbvhbv.info> later.

platform to collect signatures and boost public participation in policymaking. Unfortunately, it is difficult to find operators of the website. According to Yu Fangqiang, the website's management team is fluent, and some webmasters may be outside of Mainland China.⁶³ The Chinese government blocked or closed the website twice in 2007 and 2008. Since then, its webmasters have become more cautious and may delete sensitive posts. Although the website facilitated policy actions, it never influenced policies under its own name. As prominent organizations for hepatitis, such as Yirenping and Yiyou Charity Liver Center, have either closed or reduced activities in recent years, the website's rights protection section has become somewhat desolate. In general, informal organizations can hardly be active policy advocates, although some may serve as platforms for mobilizing constituencies to influence policies.

3.3 Passive State Corporatism and Critical Pluralism: Two Modes of Policy Influence in Health Organizations

The last section shows that the policy influence of top-down health organizations is different from that of women's organizations. First, there is no variation among official health organizations. Second, the behaviors of these organizations demonstrate that the general pattern of policy influence is neither active state corporatism nor symbolic state corporatism.

Mass organizations in the women's field can go through all the policy stages and influence policies on their initiatives. For example, in the case of the ACWF and the Women's Law, the ACWF found the problems of infringements on women's interests and suggested a solution—to enact a particular law. It put the new law on the NPC's legislative agenda and dominated the formulation process. In the following years, the ACWF kept supervising and promoting the implementation of the Women's Law and found the law's drawbacks in practice. It responded by

⁶³ The author's interview with Yu Fangqiang on Mar. 31, 2010, in Beijing.

proposing a revision of the law and again dominated the process of drafting amendments. Then the process repeated in the following years.

In contrast, top-down health organizations, whether mass organizations or other official organizations, can hardly participate in the entire policy process, and their participation is seldom based on their own initiatives. Agenda setting is the stage in which these organizations usually refrain from participating. In the AIDS field, for example, all policy initiatives originated from the MOH or higher authorities in the CCP, the State Council, or the NPC. These organizations never submitted policy proposals to set a new agenda. The Party-state merely mobilizes them to contribute to HIV/AIDS combat. The primary role they play in the policy process is implementing relevant policies. Sometimes policymaking authorities invite them to formulate or evaluate policies. However, their participation is only based on invitations or directives. In other words, they generally do not actively request opportunities to participate in policy formulation or evaluation. In addition, they more often than not play a minor role in formulating or evaluating a policy and seldom bring forward their own initiatives in the process. In the AIDS field, for example, the government—specifically the MOH and the State Council—dominated the formulation of all major policies and national plans so that social actors did not get a chance to influence these policies. In the author's fieldwork, no less than four leaders of social organizations complained that the major AIDS policies, especially the Regulations on the Prevention and Treatment of AIDS, were formulated behind closed doors. As mentioned before, Li Xiang published an article in *Legal Daily* to expose the issue.

However, their passive participation in the policy process does not mean they play a symbolic role. In fact, these organizations are major implementation entities in the policy process. In addition, they still contribute to policy formulation/evaluation to some extent. These make them

differ from those symbolic organizations in the women's field that do not play important roles in implementing policies and usually do not participate in policy formulation or evaluation.

Therefore, the policy influence of top-down health organizations reveals a new mode different from active state corporatism and symbolic state corporatism. Because the primary feature of this mode is to participate in the policy process and influence policies passively, it is named "passive state corporatism" in this study. It is a unitary mode of policy influence identified in top-down health organizations.

Regarding interest representation of constituencies, passive state corporatism is also distinct from active state corporatism and symbolic state corporatism. Symbolic state corporatism does not pay attention to the interests of their supposed-to-be constituencies at all or makes it a slogan. It does not build up long-lasting connections with the grassroots. On the contrary, active state corporatist organizations are willing to represent the interests of their constituencies and seek to establish stable and solid connections with the grassroots. They take action actively to collect and articulate the opinions of their constituencies and convey them to the government, although they have limitations to do so. They may also try to influence policies based on these opinions. Passive state corporatism is in the middle of these two extremes. It does not actively represent the interests of its constituencies by reaching out to collect and articulate their opinions regularly. Because of its passive status in the policy process, it will neither intentionally bring these opinions to policymakers to influence policies. In a word, it does not care about the interests of its constituencies as much as active state corporatism does. However, it may serve as a platform on which grassroots organizations or individuals gain some access to policymakers and manifest their opinions and demands. To implement policies well and extend their influence on the grassroots, passive state corporatist organizations may strengthen their connections with the grassroots and

perform such a platform function to different degrees. In short, passive state corporatism also embodies the passive representation of interests.

Unlike top-down health organizations, bottom-up organizations in this field show some commonalities with their counterparts in the women's field. There is also variation in terms of policy influence among these organizations. In addition to informal organizations, silent pluralism is popular among community organizations by PLWHA and high-risk groups, and non-group-based organizations created by people from the health system. Although community organizations show some willingness to influence policies, they generally do not speak it out and take concrete actions to fulfill policy goals. As a result, their voice is still absent in the policy arena. In the rest three categories, with relatively high levels of willingness and actions and moderate achievements in influencing policies, embedded pluralism is also identified in the activities of some organizations, such as the GFWI, the MSG, and Birch Woods. Some other organizations, including the COAP, Loving Source, ITPC-China, the WNAC, and the HHC, show signs of retreatment in dealing with their relationships with the state. As a result, the mode of their policy influence changed to either embedded pluralism or silent pluralism. Nevertheless, some organizations in these three categories, at least in certain stages, influenced policies in a different way from embedded pluralism, which displays some unique characteristics.

First, these organizations generally took a critical attitude toward the state instead of holding a mild stance without any insulting words embodied by embedded pluralism. They scrutinized relevant policies or government actions and did not hesitate to criticize if they found these policies or actions contradicted their positions and harmed the interests of their organizations and constituencies. For example, the website of Aizhixing was replete with critical information, including criticizing opaque legislation, revealing brutal police actions, and complaining about

governmental harassment and wrongdoings. For another example, as mentioned before, Tong Ge drastically opposed the CDC's mechanism of managing MSM groups and stopped its promulgation. The critical stance was also apparent in the activities of the Ark of Love and the CAP+, the CWRW, Yirenping, Loving Source, ITPC-China, the WNAC, the HHC, and the early stage of the COAP.

Second, these organizations applied more aggressive approaches to influence policies than embedded pluralism does. As mentioned above, some organizations directly wrote letters to relevant agencies to express their demands, which was popular among these organizations. In 2005, Tong Ge wrote three letters to Wang Longde, then vice health minister. The HHC wrote three letters to Premier Wen Jiabao for different demands in 2006, 2009, and 2010. Sometimes they posted these letters online to make them open to the public.

Mobilizing their constituencies to influence policies was another significant means of exerting pressure on the government. In addition to signature campaigns, they encouraged grassroots people to contact their governments in different ways. For example, the HHC encouraged hemophilia patients to call or fax some government agencies persistently and eventually achieved their goals.

Filing complaints (*jubao*) or administrative lawsuits was also a way to achieve their goals. Yirenping filed complaints against numerous institutions about their violation of laws or regulations for discriminating against HBV carriers. In 2010, Aizhixing reported ten media institutions to multiple agencies for inappropriate reporting of detaining sex workers carrying condoms.⁶⁴ Receiving no response, Aizhixing sued the Central Publicity Department of the CCP to the First Beijing Intermediate Court.

Petitioning (*shangfang*) is a direct channel to talk to officials face to face. Some organizations

⁶⁴ Behavioral intervention requires the promotion of condom use to reduce the transmission of HIV. A policy document issued by nine agencies in 1998 clearly states that the possession of condoms cannot be used as proof of commercial sexual transactions. However, the police working at the grassroots level constantly use condoms seized from women suspected of engaging in commercial sexual transactions as proof against them, and local press often reports these actions as achievements in the crackdown on prostitution. See Xia (2004, 137) and Shen and Csete (2017).

adopted this means to influence policies. To ensure the availability of TDF, for example, the CAP+ visited the SCAWC, the MOH, and the SFDA and submitted a petition letter with signatures of more than 5,000 PLWHA in November 2007. In fact, petitioning once became the major advocating means for the HHC. Some HHC leaders and patients regularly visited Petitioning Offices (*xinfang bangongshi*) in relevant local agencies to demand solutions to their complex problems.

Since implementing the Regulations on the Disclosure of Government Information in 2008, applying for disclosure of government information has become a new tactic for policy influence. Yirenping and Aizhixing frequently employed this method. Aizhixing even applied to the MOH for disclosing such sensitive information as blood-related HIV transmission around 1995. Dissatisfied with the results, sometimes it applied administrative reconsideration to higher authorities. Aizhixing also trained and funded other AIDS organizations to apply for government information disclosure.

It is hard for grassroots organizations to find NPC representatives and CPPCC members to submit policy proposals for them. To overcome this disadvantage, some health organizations invented a unique way of “citizen proposals,” i.e., submitting proposals—usually by mail—under their own names during yearly NPC and CPPCC sessions. It was usually accompanied by a media campaign to raise the visibility of the proposals. Although these proposals could not enter the official procedure, they had impacts on society and those inside the official system who read them. Yirenping, ITPC-China, and Aizhixing used this method when advocating for the availability of drugs.

Street activities were also a highlight in their various advocating approaches. Some were quasi-protests. In addition to the CWRW’s display of performance art mentioned above, Yirenping

organized activities of kite flying in 2008 and 2009 in many provinces of China. In 2008, Aizhixing supported some people to attend a demonstration in Hong Kong as a protest to the decision of the State Administration of Radio Film and Television⁶⁵ to prohibit homosexual plots in films. Yirenping also sponsored many street activities of the YFAG.

Third, some of these organizations went beyond their usual working area and involved themselves in more politically sensitive issues, which is unacceptable for embedded pluralism. As a famous dissident, Hu Jia is known for his activities to defend human rights. Wan Yanhai is another politically sensitive figure because he defended human rights and criticized many issues. The Chinese government especially loathes him for his involvement in the case of Chen Guangcheng and his endorsement of Liu Xiaobo. In 2009, both Aizhixing and Yirenping participated in the campaign against Green Dam-Youth Escort, a government-sponsored content-control software some organizations and individuals deemed to be a hindrance to freedom of speech. In 2010, Ye Haiyan attended Ai Weiwei's⁶⁶ "crab feast" in Shanghai, a quasi-protest in response to the persecution of Ai and his studio, and mourned for Qian Yunhui⁶⁷ in Zhejiang Province.

Finally, these health organizations relied more on building coalitions to influence policies than women's organizations. There were few such nationwide coalitions in women's organizations as the CAP+, the CHCN, the CMTHF, the WNAC, and ITPC-China. Although the organizing structures of these coalitions were relatively loose, they provided mechanisms to mobilize

⁶⁵ This agency merged with the former General Administration of Press and Publication in March 2013. The new agency is the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film, and Television.

⁶⁶ Ai Weiwei is a contemporary artist and political activist in China. He is critical of the Chinese Government's stance on democracy and human rights. In 2011, Ai Weiwei was detained for 81 days without charge. After being allowed to leave China in 2015, he lived in Germany and the UK.

⁶⁷ Qian Yunhui was a village head in Wenzhou, Zhejiang Province. He was crushed by a truck and died in December 2010. His village had conflicts with the local government because of land requisition, and he engaged in petitions actively in past years. After his death, his villagers thought the local government murdered him and conflicted with the local police force. The case was eventually officially confirmed as a traffic accident, and some villagers were punished. This case developed into a public event in China.

grassroots support and might exert more significant pressure on the government. In addition, some health organizations built temporary coalitions when they tried to influence specific policies jointly. Some women's organizations also collaborated to influence policies. However, their efforts were less consistent and coordinated than policy coalitions created by health organizations. The YFAG was the only nationwide coalition in the women's field that actively influenced policies. However, their actions remained limited and hard to sustain, facing political restrictions and coordination challenges. Some scholars argue that these limitations differentiate their collective actions from social movements (Gåsemyr, 2016).

These characteristics distinguish the policy influence mode of these health organizations from embedded pluralism. Because other characteristics derive from their critical attitude toward the state, this mode of policy influence is called “critical pluralism” in this research. It must be pointed out that critical pluralism does not mean opposing the state generally, i.e., these organizations did not aim to subvert the current political regime. In fact, they might adopt some collaborative strategies and cooperate with the state under some circumstances, and a few even maintained relatively good relationships with the state. Cooperating with the state may coexist with criticizing the state to different degrees in different organizations. The commonality of these organizations was that they did not seek to cooperate with the state at the cost of sacrificing the right to criticize the state.

Thus, two new modes of policy influence—passive state corporatism and critical pluralism—are identified in health organizations. To further manifest these two modes of policy influence, four cases, two for each mode, are provided below for illustration.

The Chinese Association of STD and AIDS Prevention and Control (CASAPC)

The CASAPC had played a low-profile role within the health system since its establishment

in 1993 and only gained importance after the national AIDS policy turned in 2003. It is devoted to receiving funds and implementing various projects throughout the country, while policy affairs are a marginal part of its workload. It participates in the policy process based on invitations or appointments. Moreover, it seldom initiates policy proposals when it participates in the process.⁶⁸ For example, the MOH or the SCAWC appointed the CASAPC to compose the section on social organizations in the Joint Assessment of HIV/AIDS Prevention and Treatment in China, a national report required by the UNAIDS, multiple times since 2007. To finish these reports, it conducted surveys in social organizations. In 2007, it drafted the Action Plan for the Participation of MSM in HIV/AIDS Prevention and Treatment under the invitation of the NCAIDS. These activities were not out of its own initiation and lobbying efforts. Those surveys neither resulted in the CASAPC's policy proposals. In its long history, only one survey of youths' online sexual behaviors in 2018 was cited by a CPPCC member in her conference speech.⁶⁹ In 2005, the CASAPC established a Working Committee on Laws and Policies and invited Li Dun, a legal expert at Tsinghua University, to be the head of the committee. However, the CASAPC neither attaches much importance to the committee nor allocates resources. Li Dun's proposals of policy-related projects were all denied.⁷⁰ As a result, the committee has not improved the CASAPC's performance in the AIDS policy area. It brought forward few policy proposals except two to the MOH and the State Council in 2011.⁷¹ These two proposals, however, did not generate significant policy outcomes.

The CASAPC is not a highly influential actor even in policy implementation. Unlike the women's field, official health organizations are underprivileged compared with the government

⁶⁸ Li Dun, a legal expert at Tsinghua University, confirmed the marginal role of the CASAPC in AIDS policymaking. According to the author's interview with Li Dun on Mar. 30, 2012, in Beijing, the CASAPC attended policy meetings of the MOH but never put forward essential policy initiatives.

⁶⁹ The CASAPC news, available at http://www.aids.org.cn/article-detail?id=3417&column_id=14, accessed May 21, 2020.

⁷⁰ The author's interview with Li Dun on Mar. 30, 2012, in Beijing.

⁷¹ 2011 annual report of the CASAPC and the author's interview with Li Dun on Mar. 30, 2012, in Beijing.

sector. Sometimes they must swallow an insult from the government. For example, in July 2006, the CCM proposed the CASAPC as the PR for the sixth round of the Global Fund, and the CASAPC also endeavored to take over the position from the CDC. However, the candidacy was denied in March 2007, according to a decision made by the MOH and the Global Fund. The CASAPC had no choice but to give the position back to the CDC (Kaufman 2009, 168-169). Since March 2018, the CASAPC has been officially affiliated with the CDC, which downgraded its status. For another example, in 2015, the MOH decided to set up the management office of the newly established China AIDS Fund for Non-governmental Organizations in the CPMA instead of the CASAPC. Participating only in the management and consulting committees of the fund, the CASAPC plays an auxiliary role in allocating a large amount of domestic funding.

In implementing projects, the CASAPC needs to strengthen connections with grassroots organizations. On the one hand, these organizations can facilitate the CASAPC to complete those projects and attract more funds in the future. On the other hand, they help to extend the CASAPC's influence in different localities. In 2005, the CASAPC launched a reform called "five transformations." The tenet of the reform was to provide more support to and build more connections with grassroots organizations and make the CASAPC a bridge connecting grassroots organizations and the government. Later, the CASAPC implemented the AIDS Community Participation Project of the Global Fund and a research project on social organizations' participation in AIDS prevention and control, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Up to 2009, the CASAPC held six joint conferences with grassroots organizations. Those conferences also convened representatives of the governments and their affiliated institutions, other official organizations, international organizations, and enterprises. They served as a platform for grassroots organizations to contact other actors, especially government representatives, and convey their

opinions and demands. However, the CASAPC is not a sustainable provider of such a platform. In 2011, this joint conference was combined with another serial conference, in which representatives of the CASAPC and its local branches, and other official organizations dominated.⁷² Since 2014, the CASAPC has held a high-profile annual academic conference. Nonetheless, these conferences usually invite medical experts, while grassroots organizations only have sporadic presentations.⁷³ Because grassroots organizations are still crucial for the CASAPC in implementing projects, their cooperation continues. For example, in 2019, it established a special fund supporting community-based AIDS organizations. Unfortunately, its interest in connecting these grassroots organizations to the government is diminishing.

Under the suggestion of UNAIDS and the approval of the SCAWC and the MOH, the China Red Ribbon Beijing Forum was established in July 2010. The CASAPC had been appointed to be the secretariat of the forum. This forum aimed to draw together various actors, including the government, social organizations, specialists, and grassroots representatives, to deliberate on the issue of HIV/AIDS and human rights. Multiple topics, including some sensitive ones, were discussed at the forum and related symposiums, e.g., medical and employment discrimination on PLWHA, the compensation to people who were infected with HIV through blood transfusion, the participation of social organizations, abstinence from drugs, and CSW and the infection of HIV. Serving as the secretariat, the CASAPC compiled minutes of meetings and posted them on a website it created for the forum. In 2012 and 2014, it even facilitated some CPPCC members to submit multiple policy proposals to the CPPCC based on reports produced at the forum.⁷⁴ However, the CASAPC did not put forward its own policy initiatives at these forums and symposiums. The

⁷² According to the author's interview with an official of the CASAPC on Aug. 24, 2010, these conferences were basically funded by different projects. Shrinking or disappearing funds made more of such joint conferences impossible.

⁷³ This is drawn from the annual introduction of these academic conferences on the CASAPC's website.

⁷⁴ 2012 and 2014 annual reports of the CASAPC.

CASAPC confined its role to an organizer instead of an active participant. Since 2016, it has stopped holding the China Red Ribbon Beijing Forum, which further indicates that the CASAPC is not a sustainable provider of a platform for interest articulation and policy debate.

The Red Cross Society of China (RCSC)

As introduced before, relevant mass organizations are all involved in HIV/AIDS combat. However, the RCSC is the sole mass organization in the health field. Its history is traced back to the late Qing dynasty, so the RCSC is China's oldest mass organization. Its status was further consolidated in the 1990s (Reeves, 2014). The NPC adopted the Law on Red Cross Society in 1993, and the State Council issued Measures on the Use of the Sign of Red Cross in 1996. These serve as legal bases and protection for the RCSC's activities. In 1994, the General Secretary of the CCP and Chinese President, Jiang Zemin, was invited to be the honorary president of the RCSC. His successor, Hu Jintao, succeeded in his position in the RCSC in 2004. Li Yuanchao and Wang Qishan, two successive Vice Presidents of China, served as the honorary president of the RCSC from 2015. The health minister concurrently held the president of the RCSC since the CCP's takeover in 1950. Since 1994, this position has been upgraded to Vice Chairperson of the CPPCC or the NPC Standing Committee. In 1999, the State Commission Office for Public Sector Reform issued a document that changed the RCSC's supervisory body from the MOH to the State Council and bestowed full-time staff of the RCSC the status of civil servants. By the end of 2011, the RCSC had established 2,848 county-level branches in all 31 provinces of the country and enrolled 26.58 million individual members, 110 thousand organizational members, and 2.15 million volunteers.⁷⁵ By September 2019, it had established more than 90 thousand grassroots branches and enrolled 17 million individual members and 1.2 million volunteers.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ <http://www.redcross.org.cn/hhzh/zh/hsigk/hszjs>, accessed Sep. 30, 2013.

⁷⁶ <https://www.redcross.org.cn/html/2019-09/62215.html>, accessed May 6, 2020. The RCSC has significantly lost members and

According to the Law on Red Cross Society and the RCSC's constitution, the RCSC is characterized as a philanthropic social organization engaged in social assistance. Hua Jianmin, former president of the RCSC, generalized the RCSC's core responsibilities as disaster relief (*jiuzai*), medical rescue (*jiuhu*), social relief (*jiuzhu*), and voluntary donation of blood, organs, and hematopoietic stem cells.⁷⁷ The RCSC is also one of the organizations participating early in the state's HIV/AIDS prevention and control. It is a member of both the SCAWC and the CCM of the Global Fund. In 2008, it set up an HIV/AIDS prevention office to support and serve its HIV/AIDS work throughout the country. Like the CASAPC, the RCSC's involvement in HIV/AIDS prevention and care mainly focuses on conducting projects funded by the government, international organizations, and Red Cross Societies of other countries⁷⁸. By the end of 2009, it had conducted 18 projects in 27 provinces⁷⁹. The RCSC listed its AIDS projects as one of its notable projects on the website. The activities of these projects mainly include peer education among the youth, PLWHA, and high-risk groups, helping PLWHA make a living by themselves, funding AIDS orphans and childless seniors, and one-on-one assistance of school-age children affected by AIDS.⁸⁰ As China's HIV/AIDS cases tend to be stable, the RCSC has downsized its HIV/AIDS projects since 2015.

The RCSC's HIV/AIDS work focuses solely on service delivery. Despite its mass organization status, guaranteed access to policymakers, and enormous resources, it does not have any records of influencing AIDS-related policies. It formulated the 2005-2009 Work Plan on AIDS

volunteers.

⁷⁷ http://www.redcrossol.com/sys/html/lm_4/2014-03-21/104551.htm, accessed April 21, 2014.

⁷⁸ For example, in introducing its AIDS projects in 2012, the RCSC listed fiscal finance of the Chinese central government, the United Nations Population Fund, and Red Cross Societies of Great Britain, Holland, the United States, Australia, and Switzerland as funding sources. See http://www.redcross.org.cn/hhzh/zh/ppyw/azbfyyga/201210/t20121012_1263.html, accessed Sep. 30, 2013. The RCSC has the unique ability to obtain funding from Red Cross Societies in other countries.

⁷⁹ http://www.redcross.org.cn/zx/yw/200912/t20091201_34653.html, accessed Dec. 27, 2010.

⁸⁰ http://www.redcross.org.cn/hhzh/zh/ppyw/azbfyyga/201210/t20121012_1264.html, accessed Sep. 30, 2013.

Prevention and Control in 2005 and complemented this plan in 2008 as a general guide for its AIDS work.⁸¹ However, there was not a single word in the plan that mentioned influencing AIDS policies or articulating the interests of HIV carriers and AIDS patients. Still, the 2010-2014 Development Scheme for Chinese Red Cross Endeavor only planned to scale up its existing service-oriented projects in behavioral intervention in high-risk groups, community education, and care for PLWHA and their family members without mentioning influencing policies. In its following two development schemes (2015-2019 and 2020-2024), HIV/AIDS projects were just briefly mentioned, let alone influencing relevant policies. The SCAWC assigns the RCSC three responsibilities in the AIDS combat: facilitating the health system to mobilize voluntary blood donation; facilitating relevant government agencies to extend care and relief to HIV carriers, AIDS patients, and their family members; mobilizing the RCSC's members, volunteers, and youth to participate in the publicity and education for AIDS prevention and control.⁸² It seems the RCSC confines itself to fulfilling these responsibilities and implementing relevant policies. Influencing AIDS policies never became a topic at any of the RCSC's AIDS-related conferences and never appeared in any addresses of the RCSC's leaders. Like the CASAPC, the RCSC also cooperated with grassroots organizations when it conducted projects at different localities, whereas it did not create platforms to link these organizations to the governments.

Surprisingly, the RCSC's passive mode of policy influence not only exists in its AIDS work but pervades all its working fields. Unlike other mass organizations, the RCSC has not formulated any plan to observe and influence legislation and seldom creates new policies. It neither has a department to conduct policy research or protect patients' interests. Among the 14 responsibilities listed in its constitution, the only policy-related item is publicizing and implementing the Law on

⁸¹ The RCSC has stopped formulating such particular AIDS-related work plans since 2011.

⁸² <http://new.chain.net.cn/a/ziyuanzhongxin/zlxz/yfyjy/2013/0409/328.html>, accessed Oct. 5, 2013.

Red Cross Society and Measures on the Use of the Sign of Red Cross. As a mass organization, it has opportunities to participate in inspections of the implementation of the above two policies launched by the NPC or the CPPCC. However, it never found drawbacks to these policies and proposed revisions for 20 years until the Guo Meimei event⁸³ dramatically damaged its public trust and fundraising capacity (Deng and Zhao 2014, 210; Reeves 2014, 228). In 2013, the RCSC proposed a revision of the Law on Red Cross Society and put it on the NPC's legislative agenda. It expected a more independent status and more resource input from the government. A policy initiative like this was exceedingly rare in the RCSC's history. In 2017, the NPC adopted the revised Law on Red Cross Society. Contrary to the RCSC's expectations, the law strengthens oversight of the RCSC and does not increase resource input. Nevertheless, despite implementing the new law, the RCSC's image was further damaged in combatting COVID-19 in 2020 thanks to the tardy and unfair distribution of personal protective equipment and other donations by its branches in Wuhan City and Hubei Province (Cai et al. 2021, 116; Chen 2023, 576). Occasionally, the RCSC participated in policy formulation/revision based on invitations. For example, the MOH invited the RCSC to participate in enacting the Blood Donation Law in 1997; in 2009, the MOH invited the RCSC to take part in revising the Regulations on Human Organ Transplantation and appointed the RCSC as the implementing institution. However, the MOH dominated the policymaking process, and the RCSC never performed as an influential participant. While revising the Law on Red Cross Society, the NPC also invited the RCSC to participate. As introduced above,

⁸³ Guo Meimei was a young lady who showed off her wealth and declared an RCSC-related title online in June 2011. This event made the public question the RCSC's status as an organization for public interest and doubt possible corruptions within the RCSC. The RCSC initially denied its connection with Guo Meimei, but promised to launch investigations after the public disclosed Guo Meimei's indirect connection with the RCSC's branch in the commercial industry. However, the truth of this event is still elusive to the public because the RCSC neither conducted serious investigations nor sued Guo Meimei to demand a court investigation. As a result, public trust and donations to the RCSC dropped dramatically, and it also lost many members and volunteers. In July 2014, Guo Meimei was arrested by Beijing police for illegal gambling and setting up casinos. Guo apologized to the RCSC in August 2014 but did not significantly change the RCSC's damaged image. Guo was released in July 2019 after five years of imprisonment. In March 2021, Guo was arrested again for the crime of selling toxic or harmful foods and was sentenced to two and a half years of imprisonment. She was released in September 2023.

it failed to fulfill the original goals in the revision and must accept more restrictions imposed by the new legislation. Chinese experts also identified the low level of the RCSC's policy influence. In 2008, the RCSC invited a research team led by Professor Wang Ming from Tsinghua University to evaluate its organizational development. The team evaluated six categories composed of 25 indices. The lowest two scores emerged from the following two indices: influence on the state policy process and effective participation of stakeholders in organizational decision-making.⁸⁴ The study indicates that the RCSC's performance in both policy influence and interest representation is less than satisfactory.

The above evaluation also included the RCSC's internal discussions on the results. Most discussants deemed the reasons for the lowest scores might lie in the work orientation set up by the government and the RCSC's priorities. Influencing policies could not become one of the RCSC's work priorities if service delivery is the primary function the state bestows on the RCSC. Unlike most mass organizations, the RCSC does not acquire specific constituencies assigned by the state. According to the Law on Red Cross Society, the RCSC aims to serve all the people, and every citizen can become a member. As a result, the law does not list interest representation and participation in policymaking as the RCSC's responsibilities.⁸⁵ Hence, these are naturally excluded from the RCSC's constitution laid down based on the law. In the health field, because the RCSC is not bestowed with the function to represent patients or any other particular groups, it will not treat them as constituencies, and these groups, in return, do not treat the RCSC as a representing institution. Therefore, the RCSC lacks either the power or the motivation to actively influence health policies. It mainly serves as an implementer of relevant policies. The case of the RCSC

⁸⁴ The evaluation report was found on the RCSC's website. The RCSC accepted the conclusions of the evaluation. See http://www.redcross.org.cn/hszsy/zzjs/zzfz/200806/t20080622_18552.html, accessed Nov. 27, 2010.

⁸⁵ Article 11 of the revised Law on Red Cross Society specifies nine responsibilities of the RCSC. None of them includes interest representation or policy participation.

shows that mass organizations may not necessarily fall into the category of active state corporatism. If a mass organization is not assigned certain constituencies and is only granted the function of implementing policies instead of participating in the whole policy process, it will focus on this function and fall into the category of passive state corporatism. Thus, policy influence modes of state corporatist organizations stem from the exterior source—state authorization and empowerment.

Yirenping and HBV Carriers' Acquisition of the Certificate of Health for Practitioners in the Food Industry

In the 1990s, the prevalent point of view about HBV contagion in China was that the virus could spread through daily contact with carriers. As a result, various policies were enacted to limit or even ban HBV carriers' access to education and employment. Because all practitioners in the food industry—businesses involved in food processing—are required to obtain the Certificate of Health for Practitioners in the Food Industry (the Certificate hereafter) from the CDC and because HBV carriers were prohibited from passing the relevant physical examination, the large population of HBV carriers was completely excluded from the food industry.

With deepening knowledge of HBV transmission, more and more Chinese doctors and medical experts realized the virus was not transmitted by food or water and would not spread casually in the workplace. In cooperation with some NPC representatives and CPPCC members, they tried to persuade the government to lift the ban or loosen the restrictions on HBV carriers' education and employment, including employment in the food industry. In the meantime, the intensive discontent from the community of HBV carriers also exerted tremendous pressure on the government. The combination of these forces made the government change its official stance and begin to revise some relevant policies gradually since 2003. In 2009, the Food Safety Law and its

detailed rules for implementation were adopted and took effect, in which HBV carriers are not banned from processing foods in the food industry. However, departmental rules at the national level and numerous local policies relevant to the Certificate remained unchanged, so HBV carriers were still prohibited from the food industry in practice. The most prominent hindrance among these policies was the Measures for Preventive Health Inspection issued by the MOH in 1995, which listed viral hepatitis as an imperative examination item for practitioners in specific industries, including the food industry.

As early as January 2009, Yirenping listed HBV carriers' acquisition of the Certificate as one of the anti-discrimination objectives at the second national HBV carriers' conference⁸⁶. After the Food Safety Law and its detailed rules for implementation became effective, Yirenping started to mobilize local HBV carriers to challenge existing policies by applying for the Certificate. Lei Chuang⁸⁷, an activist connected tightly with Yirenping, acted as the vanguard to obtain the first Certificate in the community of HBV carriers. He visited every hierarchy in the health administration system of Zhejiang Province and overcame various difficulties before he acquired the approval 16 days later—An ordinary applicant usually takes 2-3 business days. Using this case as an example, Yirenping launched a media campaign to expose the issue of the Certificate and mobilized other HBV carriers to follow suit. The community responded actively. Many HBV carriers took action to apply for the first Certificate in their provinces, which in turn became remarkable topics in the media. A few provinces announced opening the Certificate to HBV carriers, while others remained conservative and refused to change their old policies. Under the

⁸⁶ Yirenping organized the first national HBV carriers' conference in October 2007. According to the author's interview with Yu Fangqiang, the government did not interfere with these conferences.

⁸⁷ Lei Chuang is also known for persistently sending hundreds of letters to Premier Wen Jiabao and Premier Li Keqiang and making long-distance pedestrian journeys to Beijing to advocate for favorable policies for HBV carriers. In 2015, he registered Yiyou Charity Liver Center in Guangzhou. The organization combats social discrimination against HBV carriers and contributed to reduced prices and expanded health insurance coverage of HBV drugs. In 2018, Lei Chuang was accused of sexual assault. He admitted his fault and left Yiyou Charity Liver Center. Activities and influence of the organization have reduced since then.

circumstances, Yirenping decided to support administrative lawsuits.

Yirenping selected four localities that refused to issue HBV carriers the Certificates after media exposure. Because public interest litigations were still generally absent in China's legal practice, Yirenping had to facilitate the rejected applicants to sue relevant agencies instead of filing lawsuits by itself. In Hunan and Guangxi, they sued the Bureaus of Health in their capital cities, while the defendants in Beijing and Shandong were Departments of Health and CDCs at the provincial level. These lawsuits proceeded differently in different locations. The most successful case occurred in Beijing. After the January 2010 court hearing, the judge suspended subsequent hearings and communicated with the MOH regarding applying relevant rules. On February 12, the MOH promulgated a revised version of the Measures for Preventive Health Inspection, abolishing the imperative HBV examination. The Beijing Municipal Bureau of Health also issued a new rule on managing the Certificate, according to which the plaintiff obtained the first Certificate issued to an HBV carrier in Beijing. In Hunan Province, Yirenping and its client lost the first trial at the end of January 2010. However, they refused to give up. Because Yirenping found the proof provided by the defendant conflicted with the current Food Safety Law and its detailed rules for implementation, it filed a complaint against the Department of Health of Hunan Province to the MOH and demanded an executive responsibility inquisition. These actions led to intensive media reports and social discussions, exerting significant pressure on relevant agencies. On February 24, the Changsha—the capital city of Hunan Province—municipal CDC adjusted the physical examination scheme for the Certificate. It was confirmed on the media the next day that HBV carriers were eligible to obtain the Certificate. In Shandong, Yirenping negotiated with the provincial CDC for a settlement. Eventually, the CDC issued the plaintiff the Certificate in exchange for *nolle prosequi*. Under the influence of these cases, the Guangxi agencies changed

relevant policies before the opening of the court session.

A series of actions taken by Yirenping and the community of HBV carriers resulted in great percussions in the country. The scientific knowledge of HBV transmission and the idea of anti-discrimination were spread throughout the country. The issue of conflicts between existing policies and new laws drew the attention of both the public and relevant agencies. Intensive media exposure and public discussions also exerted tremendous pressure on the governments. Soon, the struggles for the Certificate came to fruition in a broader range. By April 2010, the MOH, the MOHRSS, and the MOE revised or issued ten rules or regulatory documents to ensure HBV carriers' rights to education and employment. Multiple provinces also changed various policies during this period. As a result, policy changes concerning anti-discrimination on HBV carriers peaked in the first few months of 2010. This remarkable success could not be separated from Yirenping's efforts in HBV carriers' acquisition of the Certificate.

Advocating Compulsory Licenses for the Domestic Production of Lamivudine (3TC)

Lamivudine (3TC) is a crucial ARV drug for both PLWHA and hepatitis patients. GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), the third largest pharmaceutical company in the world based in London, monopolized the production and marketing of the drug in China by registering multiple patents with the Chinese SIPO regarding the producing methods of the drug. Since 1999, Heptodin, the dose of 3TC for hepatitis patients, entered China and made significant profits for the GSK. In July 2004, the GSK signed a memorandum with the MOH about providing Epivir, the dose of 3TC for PLWHA, at a discounted price to China's HIV/AIDS treatment program. Since then, the government provided Epivir to PLWHA for free, while hepatitis patients must purchase Heptodin at a formidable price.

However, the supply of Epivir was interrupted from time to time, which became a severe

threat to PLWHA because of the possible consequence of drug resistance. In the second half of 2007, the interruption became more pervasive and frequent in China. In response to the problem, some grassroots organizations launched a campaign to promote the availability of 3TC. Doctors Without Borders or *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF) in French, an international organization originating from Paris, played an essential role in the early stage of the campaign. It trained some domestic organizations, such as ITPC-China and Yirenping, and put forward a favorable solution to the problem—urging the government to issue compulsory licenses for the domestic production of lamivudine. In fact, it had lobbied relevant government agencies to do so since 2003. However, it made no visible progress.⁸⁸ China joined the WTO Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) in 2007. According to TRIPS and the Doha Declaration, a member country can use “flexible terms” to reasonably issue compulsory licenses to produce patented drugs domestically during a public health crisis, which provides a solid legal base and a new opportunity for the campaign (Kaufman 2012b, 234).

ITPC-China and Yirenping formed a working group in March 2008 to coordinate the campaign. They also invited Wan Yanhai to join the group. Based on Lu Jun’s idea, they started the campaign by submitting a “citizen proposal,” under the names of Wan Yanhai and Thomas, to ongoing NPC and CPPCC annual sessions. They also launched a media campaign to raise the proposal’s visibility. International organizations were another force they turned to for help. Hu Yuanqiong from the MSF and Gao Qi from CHAIN helped them appeal to UN agencies. Both WHO and UNAIDS contacted the MOH showing their concerns over the issue.⁸⁹ Mobilizing HIV/AIDS and hepatitis communities was the next step. ITPC-China and Yirenping jointly drafted

⁸⁸ The author’s interview with Hu Yuanqiong, a former program manager of the MSF, on Sep. 14, 2010, in Beijing.

⁸⁹ The author’s interview with Zhou Ji, former general coordinator of ITPC-China, on Sep. 10, 2010, in Beijing; the author’s interview with Hu Yuanqiong on Sep. 14, 2010, in Beijing; the author’s interview with Gao Qi, former executive director of CHAIN, on Jan. 5, 2012, in Hong Kong.

an open letter and collected signatures via cyberspace, emails, and faxes. In April, they received support from the CHCN, which had been enlarged to 101 member organizations by then. In the meantime, Yirenping organized various seminars and training sessions in different locations in China to popularize relevant knowledge and further mobilize the communities.⁹⁰ These efforts led to active responses from the communities. For example, after a meeting held in Wuhan on May 3, 2008, a group of HIV/HBV carriers from Henan, Hubei, and Hunan made and publicly displayed a banner on which they signed their names. A month before, a similar activity occurred in Jinan, Shandong Province. After receiving 1,843 signatures, three representatives submitted the open letter to the Ministry of Commerce (MOC) on May 19. They also sent copies of the letter to the SCAWC, the MOH, the SIPO, and other relevant agencies and institutions. On December 1, 2008, the 21st World AIDS Day, Lu Jun, Tian Xi, and Li Xige submitted the open letter and the signed banner to the MOC for the second time. They displayed the banner before the front door of the MOC. In addition to urging the government, the advocates also pressured GSK. In May 2008, ITPC-China and Yirenping sent an open letter to GSK requesting it to give up its monopoly of lamivudine in China. On June 15, some activists protested at its American headquarters.

Facing these pressures, government agencies took some actions. An official of the SFDA called Lu Jun in June and showed his appreciation to the advocates of the HIV/AIDS and hepatitis communities. He also manifested that several domestic pharmaceutical companies had already applied to produce lamivudine. The MOC called Yirenping and invited Lu Jun and several other representatives to attend a meeting. However, the meeting did not produce any substantial results. Their most concrete action was to hold a joint meeting on June 10, 2008. All the relevant agencies, such as the MOH, the SIPO, the MOC, and the SFDA, came to the meeting. However, no major

⁹⁰ The author's interview with Yu Fangqiang on Mar. 31, 2010, in Beijing.

advocates were invited to attend the meeting. The only grassroots representative at the meeting was Duan Jun, an HIV/AIDS leader of the Suiping County Infected People Mutual Aid Group in Henan Province and an attending observer in the China CCM (Wang 2021, 181). According to the author's online interview with him on January 17, 2011, all the other officials showed some positive attitude toward compulsory licenses except the official from the MOH, who drastically opposed the proposal. Eventually, the meeting ended without any decision. After that, the advocates received no positive response from the agencies. In the spring of 2009, ITPC-China submitted another "citizen proposal" to the NPC and the CPPCC with the signatures of 52 organizational leaders or activists from the communities of HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, and hemophilia. According to the author's phone interview with Thomas on December 24, 2010, the proposal did not generate favorable results because he thought all the agencies were evading the issue. No agency seemed willing to act as a bellwether to confront such a controversial issue, which might incur international pressures and domestic discontent from some authorities.

However, the opaque attitudes of these agencies toward compulsory licenses did not mean the issue of lamivudine would be laid aside. In fact, the SFDA turned out to be the most active agency to solve the problem. A piece of short news that appeared in February 2009 showed the SFDA had approved some domestic companies to produce lamivudine in 2008.⁹¹ Nevertheless, it seemed that the SFDA had decided to push this under the table and intentionally kept it low profile. No more information was leaked. When Yirenping applied for disclosure of the information, the SFDA chose to keep silent, which blocked possible joint efforts of social organizations and domestic pharmaceutical companies to push forward compulsory licenses.⁹² At the end of 2010, information became available on the website of the SFDA. Anhui Biochem United Pharmaceutical

⁹¹ <http://health.people.com.cn/GB/14740/22121/8791165.html>, accessed Dec. 15, 2011.

⁹² The author's interview with Yu Fangqiang on Mar. 31, 2010, in Beijing.

Co., Ltd and Hunan Qianjin Xiangjiang Pharmaceutical Industry Co., Ltd were granted the licenses to produce 3TC. According to the information obtained from Anhui Biochem, its 3TC products did not hit the domestic market until November 2010, although it was ready to produce them in 2009.⁹³ The GSK pressed Anhui Biochem but eventually failed.⁹⁴ In the meantime, another quiet battle between the GSK and domestic actors was underway. Some client committed Beijing Huake Union Patent Office to apply the reexamination of the GSK's core patent regarding the producing method of 3TC.⁹⁵ After a failure in March 2010, the Patent Reexamination Committee of the SIPO ruled the GSK's core patent invalid on December 30, 2010, which legally ended the GSK's monopoly of lamivudine in China although the patent would expire at the end of April 2011.⁹⁶ By the end of 2011, all 3TC issued to PLWHA for free had been produced domestically.⁹⁷

As far as lamivudine itself is concerned, those health organizations have achieved their goals. The GSK lost its monopoly while domestic lamivudine products have become available at lower prices. The supply of the drug has also remained sustainable since then. The SFDA played a critical role in approving domestic production of 3TC even before the GSK's core patent expired. Even though this action was in the grey area, the SFDA manipulated it skillfully by keeping it low profile and postponing the drug sale on the domestic market. The SIPO also invalidated the GSK's core patent a few months before its expiration date, although it was unwilling to publicize the result. It might indicate a tendency of Chinese agencies to achieve the goal of policy change in some hidden way. In so doing, contentions and conflicts are minimized while favorable results are

⁹³ The author's phone interviews with three staff members of Anhui Biochem, including its salesperson in Beijing, on Jan. 17, 2011.

⁹⁴ The author's phone interview with the board secretary of Anhui Biochem on Jan. 21, 2011.

⁹⁵ The author interviewed Wang Wei, director of Beijing Huake Union Patent Office, by phone on January 21, 2011. He provided some information about the case but refused to reveal the client's identity.

⁹⁶ The author's online interview with an official of the SFDA on Jan. 23, 2011, also confirmed the SIPO's decision. The SIPO usually kept these kinds of "sensitive" decisions as secrets and would not publicize them.

⁹⁷ The author's online interviews with a group of HIV carriers in December 2011.

produced. However, the opportunity to create a precedent of compulsory licenses has been lost. What has also been lost is the chance to improve the rule of law and governance transparency. In this sense, the advocates failed to achieve their long-term policy goal. As Hu Yuanqiong pointed out, “any artful management cannot substitute compulsory licenses. It may work for drugs with short-term expiring patents. What about new drugs with new patents?”⁹⁸

3.4 Reclassifying Women’s and Health Organizations: the Application of the Analytical Framework

In the last chapter, two modes of policy influence, active state corporatism and embedded pluralism, and two modes of noninfluence, symbolic state corporatism and silent pluralism, are identified in women’s organizations. In health organizations, two more modes of policy influence are discovered—passive state corporatism and critical pluralism. These modes cover a wide range of social organizations and form the analytical framework.

By far, women’s organizations and health organizations are classified according to their origins or working domains. These classifications contribute to discovering various modes of policy (non)influence and constructing the analytical framework. Since this framework has been established, these organizations can be reclassified into different policy (non)influence modes of the framework. By doing so, a more unified and theorized picture of the policy influence of these organizations is displayed. Table 3.2 and Table 3.3 show the categorization of the policy influence of women’s and health organizations, respectively.

⁹⁸ The author’s interview with Hu Yuanqiong on Sep. 14, 2010, in Beijing.

Table 3.2 Categorization of the Policy Influence of Women's Organizations

top-down organizations	active state corporatism	ACWF, five orgs affiliated with the ACWF, DWW, CFPA, three official think tanks
	passive state corporatism	three orgs affiliated with the ACWF
	symbolic state corporatism	16 other top-down orgs; at least 50 women's studies centers
bottom-up organizations	embedded pluralism	Maple Center, Center for Women's Law Studies and Legal Services of Peking University*/Zhongze*/ Beijing Qianqian Law Firm, Yuanzhong, ADVN/Fanbao/Equality, BCDC before 2016
	critical pluralism	GAD after 2009*, Media Monitor for Women Network after 2009*, Feminist Voices*, YFAG*
	silent pluralism	BCDC after 2016/Beijing Yichuang, GAD before 2009, Media Monitor for Women Network before 2009, nine internet websites

Note: Organizations with "*" ceased working because of state oppression or marginalization.

In fact, as Table 3.2 shows, passive state corporatism also exists in women's organizations. Three organizations affiliated with the ACWF—the China Women's Development Foundation, Chinese Association for Women's Newspapers and Periodicals, and All China Women's Association for Hand Knitting—focus on implementing relevant policies in their assigned working areas and seldom participate in other policy stages; therefore, they fall into the category of passive state corporatism. Chapter Two neglects this nuance because the small quantity of these organizations may not define a new mode of policy influence.

Regarding bottom-up women's organizations, the policy influence mode adopted by the GAD after 2009, the Media Monitor for Women Network after 2009, Feminist Voices, and the YFAG was consistent with critical pluralism features. Through the formalization process and organizational innovations, Lü Pin successfully changed the trajectories of two silent organizations—the GAD and the Media Monitor for Women Network—and made them a part of the new force in the women's movement. Unfortunately, critical pluralism represented by the new force has been eliminated from women's organizations. As Lü Pin reflected, the crackdown was rooted in their critical attitude toward the state and radical means to transform society, such as

massive mobilizations among individuals and organizations. After the crackdown, feminism itself has become a politically sensitive issue in China. As a result, the new force was hit harder than ordinary women's organizations. A pattern shown in Table 3.2 sustains this argument. All women's organizations adopting embedded pluralism have survived, although some experienced organizational succession. The Center for Women's Law Studies and Legal Services of Peking University and one of its successors, Zhongze, were the only organizations in this category that had suffered from state oppression. However, Qianqian Law Firm, as the other successor, still thrives even though it conducts the same activities using the same methods. Those organizations in the category of silent pluralism, including the GAD and the Media Monitor for Women Network before their transformations, are/were safe. It seems the state is more inclined to repress organizations adopting critical pluralism.

Table 3.3 Categorization of the Policy Influence of Health Organizations

top-down organizations	active state corporatism	
	passive state corporatism	six mass organizations (ACWF, ACFTU, CCYL, CFPA, RCSC, ACFIC); five orgs affiliated with the MOH (CASAPC, CPMA, CFPSA, CSBT, CFHPC)
	symbolic state corporatism	
bottom-up organizations	embedded pluralism	COAP 2007-12, GFWI, Birch Woods, MSG, WNAC after 2014, HHC after 2012
	critical pluralism	Aizhixing*, COAP before 2007**, Loving Source before 2006**, Ark of Love/CAP+*, ITPC-China before 2015, WNAC before 2014**, CMTHF*, CWRW*, Yirenping*, HHC before 2012
	silent pluralism	five orgs by persons from the health system (Homeland of Love, Home of Red Ribbon, Sunshine Doctors, CHAIN and Chaoyang Kangzhong, ThinkTank); four community orgs (Beijing Health Together, Sunshine Health Community, Beijing Zuo You Center, Yi Xian Xi Wang); COAP after 2012, Loving Source after 2006*, ITPC-China after 2015; 12 internet websites

Note: Organizations with “*” ceased working because of state oppression or marginalization. Organizations with “**” experienced state oppression but survived for at least a period.

This pattern holds in health organizations. As Table 3.3 shows, no organizations in the category of embedded pluralism suffered from state oppression. The GFWI, the MSG, and Birth

Woods always adopted embedded pluralism and never faced the survival problem due to political pressures. The COAP and the WNAC transferred to embedded pluralism from critical pluralism after they encountered state repressions. The HHC intentionally made the change after its official registration. All three organizations not only survived but made some progress in influencing policies after they finished the transformations. The eventual disappearance of the COAP and the MSG resulted from their leaders' personal choices instead of state oppression. In the category of silent pluralism, most organizations never experienced state oppression and survived. One exceptional case is Loving Source. It was eventually forced to shut down even though it abandoned critical pluralism and maintained silence for a period. This crackdown was probably because Hu Jia and Zeng Jinyan are extraordinarily sensitive dissidents in China. ITPC-China has stopped policy activities of its own will since 2015, and www.hbvhbv.com has also exercised self-censorship since 2008 and has marginalized its rights protection section in recent years. Consequently, both survived. The COAP became silent after 2012 and stayed safe. In contrast to these two categories, many organizations in the category of critical pluralism had conflicts with the state. Aizhixing, Yirenping, and the CWRW ceased working thanks to direct state crackdowns. Although the Ark of Love/the CAP+ and the CMTHF did not directly collide with the state, their insistence on critical pluralism incurred unfriendly relationships with the state and their eventual termination. Since international funds were withdrawn from China, the state has controlled major funding sources in the HIV/AIDS field and taken the lead in managing the development of HIV/AIDS-related organizations in China (Lo 2018, 10). Focusing on service delivery, programs regarding human rights issues can hardly receive support (Shen and Csete 2017, 142; Lo 2018, 10-11). The state intentionally marginalized those disobedient organizations and eventually made them terminated. To survive, a few organizations in this category transformed into either embedded

pluralism or silent pluralism. The COAP, Loving Source, and the WNAC launched their transitions after they were subject to state pressures, while the HHC and ITPC-China made the changes on their own initiatives. As analyzed above, this move increased their chance of survival. Like the women's field, the outcome in the health field is that no organizations embrace critical pluralism anymore.

Comparing these two fields, all six modes are identified in women's organizations, while active state corporatism and symbolic state corporatism are absent in health organizations. Mass organizations tend to be active state corporatist organizations in their jurisdictions but will behave passively outside their jurisdictions. Furthermore, not all mass organizations are active policy advocates, as displayed by the RCSC. Top-down organizations affiliated with government agencies or other official institutions tend to fall into passive state corporatism or symbolic state corporatism. A few organizations affiliated with mass organizations may focus on policy implementation and also fall into passive state corporatism. Embedded pluralism is always the mainstream mode of policy influence in bottom-up women's organizations. Critical pluralism emerged in this field but was quelled by the state before it grew into another mainstream mode. In the health field, critical pluralism was previously the mainstream mode of policy influence within bottom-up organizations. However, because of the threats or the facts of state oppression or marginalization, this mode has disappeared in the field. Instead, embedded pluralism has become the current mainstream mode of policy influence in the health field. Informal organizations and community organizations tend to maintain silence in the policy arena, while a few formal national organizations also exist in the category of silent pluralism in both fields. Many organizations stick to their original modes of policy influence. However, a few organizations in both fields adjusted their modes of policy influence to fulfill certain organizational goals.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter first classifies health organizations by their origins and working domains and maps out their policy influence. The policy influence of health organizations shows different features from those of women's organizations. There is no variation of policy influence within top-down health organizations, including those mass organizations acting in this field. A single new mode of policy influence is discovered—passive state corporatism, which is so labeled because these organizations behave passively in both influencing policies and representing the interests of their constituencies. Within bottom-up health organizations, embedded pluralism and silent pluralism are also found. In addition to these two modes of (non)influence, a prominently new mode of policy influence is revealed—critical pluralism, mainly characterized by a critical attitude toward the state and more aggressive approaches to influence policies. Because both non-group-based organizations and group-based organizations appear in all these three categories, it is reasonable to infer whether an organization is group-based is irrelevant to its mode/level of policy influence.

Chapter Two and Chapter Three discover six modes of policy (non)influence in women's and health organizations. They form the analytical framework, which could be used to explore the policy influence of all social organizations in China. This chapter preliminarily applies the framework to reclassify women's and health organizations and analyze their policy influence. Some significant trends are revealed by comparing these two fields. The most salient discovery is that the state is more inclined to repress organizations adopting critical pluralism. Consequently, this mode of policy influence has been generally eliminated from both fields.

As Huang (2019, 641-644) argues, despite nearly four decades of reform and opening to the outside world, the Chinese state continues to hold a commanding height in health philanthropy in terms of the registration, funding, services, and influence of NGOs devoted to this sector. The top-

down, state-centric approach to disease prevention and control remains unchanged. In the same vein, the dominance of the Chinese state and state feminism in the women's field also remains unchanged. Long (2018) holds that transnational AIDS institutions changed the format of the Chinese state's repression of AIDS activism from the direct use of violence to indirect and nonviolent operations. However, repressions from the state never stopped. After the retreat of international institutions, China's AIDS governance structure returned to the state-dominant model (Wang 2021, 182), and more direct and overt repressions also returned. Consequently, many social organizations became more cautious to influence policies (Wang 2021, 185-187; Ren and Gui, 2024).

Chapter 4 SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR MIGRANT WORKERS

As introduced before, severe social inequality accompanies China's rapid economic growth, worsening the living conditions of conventional underprivileged groups and creating new ones. Women, disabled persons, minors, and seniors are conventional underprivileged groups. In the health field, HIV/AIDS emerged recently, while some diseases, such as hepatitis and hemophilia existed a long time ago. However, all these diseases have created new medical and sociopolitical challenges and caused an organizational boom in the reform era. In this sense, all groups in the health field can be considered as unconventional underprivileged groups. Another new and unique underprivileged group created in the reform era is migrant workers, rural migrant labor engaged in non-agricultural work. This group is notoriously marginalized in China and suffers from various economic and sociopolitical discriminations (Hsu 2009, 127; Wong, 2011; Ngok 2012, 178-179). After investigating women and people affected by diseases in the last two chapters, this chapter will extend the study to migrant workers. The following two chapters discuss organizations for disabled persons, minors, and seniors.

Like other fields of social organizations, both top-down and bottom-up organizations exist in these fields. Do they try to represent the interests of their respective constituencies and influence public policies? If they do, how do they accomplish these goals? Can the analytical framework developed in the last two chapters be applied to these fields of social organizations? Will the essential findings of the previous two chapters hold in these fields? These are the main questions to be addressed in this and the following chapters. Provided that the last two chapters have developed the analytical framework, this and the following chapters classify social organizations into categories of the framework instead of categories of their origins and working domains.

4.1 The Household Registration System and Migrant Workers

In 1958, the Chinese government established a stringent household registration system (*hukou*), which privileged urban industry over rural agriculture (Pringle 2009, 177-178; Pringle 2011, 92). Those who lived in rural areas were registered as agricultural residents and engaged in agricultural work. In contrast, those who lived in urban areas were registered as non-agricultural residents and engaged in non-agricultural work. Only with administrative permission could they change their registration categories (Chan and Zhang, 1999; Tao 2009, 74-75; Ren 2012, 102-103; Zhou and Cheung 2017, 1328-1329; Jakimów 2021, 40).

Since 1978, many peasants have withdrawn from agricultural work and joined the workforce in different industries. Consequently, a group of migrant workers, whom Young (2013) calls the “non-*hukou* population,” has formed, and therefore, new issues have arisen in Chinese society. Migrant workers are denied various welfare benefits and public services available to urban residents, such as equal access to social security benefits, housing subsidies, and quality education in urban public schools for their children. In addition, they suffer from the worst plights in urban areas, including but not limited to low payments and wage arrears, insufficient labor protection, and lack of social insurance coverage (Tao 2009, 73; Thelle, 2010; Tai 2015, 29-31; Pan 2020, 4; Jakimów 2021, 6-7, 49-59; Booth et al. 2022, 976). Within this group, some stay in the territories of their original towns, while some migrate to other locations, including other towns and cities.¹

¹ The National Bureau of Statistics established an annual survey system in 2008 to collect data on migrant workers and monitor the changes. According to the data published in April 2020, by the end of 2019, before the emergence of COVID-19 and following lockdowns, the total number of migrant workers was 290.77 million. Among them, the number of migrant workers working in their original towns was 116.52 million, and that of migrant workers entering other locations was 174.25 million. One hundred thirty-five million were working in other towns and cities. The total number of migrant workers increased yearly from 2008 to 2019. (See http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/zxfb/202004/t20200430_1742724.html, accessed September 28, 2020.) By the end of 2022, the total number of migrant workers was 295.62 million. Among them, the number of migrant workers working in their original towns was 123.72 million, and that of migrant workers entering other locations was 171.9 million. More workers chose to work in their hometowns due to the pandemic of COVID-19 (see a news report of a press briefing of the National Bureau of Statistics at <https://finance.sina.com.cn/tech/roll/2023-02-28/doc-imyifzpt4882200.shtml>, accessed March 22, 2023).

As this chapter discusses, all these migrant workers are working objects of the official social organization. In contrast, bottom-up labor organizations mainly work for those who migrate to other towns and cities because this group is more vulnerable to marginalization and discrimination without urban household registration.

In July 2014, the State Council promulgated the Opinions on Further Advancing the Reform of the Household Registration System, abolishing the legal difference between agricultural and non-agricultural residents and opening household registration in small towns and cities to migrants. In 2019, the NDRC and the State Council issued two policy documents to further open household registration in cities with a population of less than three million and loosen restrictions on migrants meeting certain requirements in cities with more than three million populations. Despite these improvements, migrant workers in bigger cities still face strict registration limitations and various discriminations, and many problems for those living in smaller cities and towns remain unresolved. Integrating migrant workers into the urban society still has a long way to go (Jakimów 2021, 41-43).

4.2 The Top-down Organization for Migrant Workers: An Evolving Route of Policy Influence

The only overarching top-down organization for migrant workers is the ACFTU. It is the only trade union in China; other trade unions are illegal and banned by law (Pan 2020, 54; Booth et al. 2022, 976). Unlike the ACWF and some other mass organizations, the ACFTU neither creates a few affiliated organizations nor establishes special departments for migrant workers. In 2015, it established a leading group for migrant workers, but the group's office resides in the ACFTU's Department of Rights Protection. Therefore, the ACFTU and its various branches are the only objects studied in this section. The ACFTU's uniqueness also exists in the fact that it has gone through an evolving route in representing migrant workers and influencing relevant policies.

4.2.1 The Inactive and Passive Stage

The history of the ACFTU can be traced back to the founding of the CCP. After the establishment of the PRC, the Party-state eliminated private ownership in China's industries and segregated agricultural and non-agricultural residents in the 1950s. Accordingly, it transformed the ACFTU into a mass organization representing urban workers (*chengzhen zhigong*), mainly those working in state-owned and collective enterprises in cities. The ACFTU ceased working during the Cultural Revolution. After its restoration in 1978, the ACFTU resumed the traditional role of representing urban workers. Although migrant workers appeared soon after the implementation of the reform and opening up policy, the ACFTU disregarded them for more than two decades because of their obscure status. As Chapter Two discusses, the ACFTU has served as an active advocate for the interests of urban workers for most of its history; therefore, it falls into the category of active state corporatism in this sense. However, it had played less than a symbolic role in representing migrant workers. Because the state did not explicitly endow migrant workers with the same ideological status as urban workers, the ACFTU had neither the authorization nor the incentive to treat migrant workers as its constituencies and influence relevant policies.

After Hu Jintao became the general secretary of the CCP in 2002 and the president of China in 2003, constructing a harmonious society under the Scientific Outlook on Development gained the status of official ideological guidance. Accordingly, the Party-state proposed that migrant workers are an essential part of industrial workers in China, which was officially confirmed in the No. 1 Document of the Central Committee of the CCP in 2004. With the authorization of the Party-state, the ACFTU started to enroll migrant workers in trade unions and protect their rights and interests to some extent in 2003 (Froissart 2006, 198-200; Croucher and Miles 2010, 11; Friedman 2014, 51; Zhou 2016, 149-152, 159-161; Pan 2020, 53-54).

However, the ACFTU continued focusing on traditional urban workers while placing its work

for migrant workers in a supplementary position. From 2003 to 2005, the ACFTU never accentuated migrant workers in its work plans and reports. For example, at the end of 2005, the ACFTU planned three working emphases for 2006, none involving migrant workers. The address of Wang Zhaoguo, the chairman of the ACFTU of the time, at an important meeting held in December 2005 only briefly mentioned migrant workers in two sentences.² Although the state ideologically eliminated the difference between traditional urban workers and migrant workers, it did not explicitly grant the ACFTU the power to represent migrant workers and participate in the relevant policy process. Consequently, the ACFTU did not launch national surveys of migrant workers and bring forward policy initiatives about them. Regardless of sporadic addresses concerning migrant workers at annual NPC and CPPCC meetings, the ACFTU did not submit any proposals for enacting new or changing existing policies.

In August 2003, the ACFTU issued a policy document titled Circular Concerning Striving to Protect the Legal Rights and Interests of Migrant Workers. It listed providing services to migrant workers and implementing existing laws and other policies as major measures to protect their interests. This document served as the main guideline for the ACFTU in conducting work related to migrant workers in the following years. In practice, the ACFTU organized migrant workers into trade unions according to the Trade Union Law; helped them retrieve unpaid wages and monitored their payments based on Provisions on Minimum Wages; prodded employers to sign employment contracts with migrant workers and buy work-related injury insurance for them by implementing the Labor Law and the Regulation on Work-Related Injury Insurance. In addition, the ACFTU provided various professional training to migrant workers and monitored their working conditions according to the Production Safety Law.

² See Wang Zhaoguo's address at the third session of the 14th executive committee of the ACFTU on December 11, 2005, available at <http://ghxj.acftu.org/template/10001/file.jsp?aid=506>, accessed March 12, 2015.

Generally speaking, the ACFTU has become the major social organization to implement policies related to migrant workers since 2003, while it seldom participated in other policy stages concerning them, especially agenda setting and evaluation. Its mode of policy influence regarding migrant workers was passive state corporatism in the several years after 2003. However, despite being the major policy implementation organization, it did not accomplish remarkable achievements by the end of 2005.³

4.2.2 The Active Stage

The inadequate actions of the ACFTU dissatisfied Hu Jintao. On the first day of 2006, he sent the ACFTU a written direction (*pishi*), in which he prodded the ACFTU to unite migrant workers and take responsibility for protecting their legal rights and interests.⁴ In the following years, Hu accentuated this repeatedly in multiple directions and addresses. On the one hand, Hu's attitude exerted tremendous pressure on the ACFTU. On the other hand, it also served as an explicit assignment of migrant workers to the ACFTU; that is to say, it granted the ACFTU the power to represent migrant workers and influence relevant policies. Since then, the ACFTU's mode of policy influence regarding migrant workers has changed to active state corporatism.

While more and more migrant workers join trade unions and become a large part of its

³ According to the National Bureau of Statistics survey data, the total number of migrant workers in 2004 was 120 million. Because the number of migrant workers displayed a rising trend yearly, there were at least 120 million migrant workers in 2005 (<http://www.chinaelections.org/article/500/41235.html>, accessed March 17, 2015). According to the ACFTU Blue Book on Protecting Workers' Rights and Interests (2005), 21 million migrant workers joined trade unions by the end of 2005, accounting for 13.8% of all trade union members (<http://www.china.com.cn/chinese/law/1230425.htm>, accessed March 17, 2015). Therefore, the trade unions attracted only 17.5% of migrant workers by 2005. Based on the same Blue Book, by September 2005, 9.1 million migrant workers signed employment contracts in enterprises with trade unions, which accounted for 7.6% of all migrant workers. By the end of 2005, 12.5 million migrant workers participated in work-related injury insurance (http://www.molss.gov.cn/gb/zt/2006-12/04/content_160912.htm, accessed March 17, 2015), accounting for 10.4% of all migrant workers. Regardless of efforts of the ACFTU and multiple government sectors, wage arrears and neglected production safety were still rampant among migrant workers across the country.

⁴ The original direction was as follows: Protecting the legal rights and interests of migrant workers has become increasingly prominent. The ACFTU should take responsibility and rally them around trade unions. The ACFTU should carefully investigate and study the problem, abstract experience, work on measures, and make actual effects. Sun Chunlan, a former vice premier, cited this direction in her address at the National Trade Union's Working Experience Exchange Meeting on Protecting Legal Rights and Interests of Migrant Workers held on October 15, 2006. The text is available at <http://gonghui.shmtu.edu.cn/infoitm.aspx?id=1272>, accessed March 15, 2015.

constituents⁵, the ACFTU has fully incorporated the affairs of migrant workers into its long-term working agenda, regardless of leadership successions at both the organizational and the national levels⁶. In 2016, Ju Xiaolin was elected the first part-time vice chairman of the ACFTU as a migrant worker. The same year, the ACFTU issued its first Work Plan on Migrant Workers (2016-2020). Gradually, the ACFTU has incorporated the work of migrant workers into its existing mechanisms for rights protection, such as democratic management of enterprises, collective contracts, trade unions' supervision of labor laws, joint conferences of trade unions and government sectors, coordinating committees of trade unions, governments, and enterprises⁷, and coordinating mechanism with the MOHRSS and the judicial system to address labor disputes. In 2006, the State Council established the Joint Conference for the Work of Migrant Workers as a trans-ministry coordinating mechanism, which was upgraded to the Leading Group for the Work of Migrant Workers in 2013. Its office resides in the MOHRSS. With one vice chairman serving as a member of this institution, the ACFTU uses it as another platform to engage other agencies/organizations.

In response to Hu Jintao's written direction in 2006, the ACFTU immediately decided to treat protecting migrant workers' rights and interests as the most prominent work in that year, which was absent in the aforementioned work plan made at the end of 2005. It launched a project

⁵ By the end of 2013, the trade unions had accepted 110 million migrant workers as members, accounting for 38% of all trade union members and 40.9% of all migrant workers. (See *Sketching the Trade Unions' Achievements in Coordinating Labor Relationships in Recent Years by Applying Thoughts and Methodology of the Rule of Law*, the People's Daily, November 19, 2014.) By the end of September 2017, the trade unions had accepted 140 million migrant workers as members, accounting for 46.7% of all trade union members and 48.9% of all migrant workers. (See a news report by China National Radio on October 19, 2018. Its text is available at http://news.cnr.cn/dj/20181019/t20181019_524390175.shtml, accessed March 7, 2019.) These two numbers were only 13.8% and 17.5% respectively in 2005. In 2018, the ACFTU launched another campaign to accept eight groups, mainly composed of migrant workers, including truck drivers and couriers, as members. By 2020, 8.74 million of these kinds of new members joined trade unions (See a news report at <https://www.workercn.cn/c/2022-10-15/7194648.shtml>, accessed March 22, 2023).

⁶ Hu Jintao's successor, Xi Jinping, and Wang Zhaoguo's successors, Li Jianguo and Wang Dongming, who came to power in 2013 and 2018, respectively, continuously emphasized the ACFTU's representation of migrant workers.

⁷ The National committee includes the MOHRSS, the ACFTU, the China Enterprise Confederation, and the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce (ACFIC). Local committees are mainly composed of their local branches. This tripartism is both a regular mechanism and an emergency management tool during labor unrest. For its operation, see Chen (2010).

to manage ten substantive affairs for migrant workers in 2006 and another project to establish ten mechanisms to protect their rights and interests in the next year (Croucher and Miles 2010, 12). It gradually created some renowned activities to serve migrant workers in multiple aspects, such as “sending out warmth,” “aiding students in the golden fall,” “returning home safely,” “workers’ libraries,” “aiding month for employment and entrepreneurship,” “the action of achieving studying dreams,” “warm corners for outdoor workers,” and the legal service project of “obeying the law and building the dream.” In addition to providing these services, the ACFTU strengthened its work on implementing policies to protect migrant workers. For example, it created and implemented the “three-year action plan on implementing the labor contract institution” from 2006 to 2008 and the “rainbow plan” to push for collective wage negotiations from 2011 to 2013. It also established a reporting system for wage arrears and provides legal aid to workers. From 2016 to 2020, the ACFTU helped more than five million migrant workers get unpaid wages, totaling more than 53.2 billion yuan (about 8 billion U.S. dollars).⁸ Since 2013, the ACFTU has mobilized more migrant workers to join social insurance plans⁹ and has made progress with the challenging issue of trans-regional transfer and continuation of social insurance. In addition, the ACFTU regularly participates in the NPC’s or the CPPCC’s inspections on the implementation of multiple laws and joins relevant governmental sectors to supervise various affairs related to migrant workers, including investigations on severe cases violating labor laws and regulations. According to a quantitative study by Booth et al. (2022), migrant workers in workplaces with active unions enjoy

⁸ According to an online news report titled Federation Helped Migrants Recoup Unpaid Wages of More than 50 Billion in Five Years, available at <http://www.chuzhou.cn/2020/1224/430918.shtml>, accessed March 22, 2023.

⁹ By the end of 2017, 62.02 million migrant workers had participated in basic pension insurance, 62.25 million in basic medical insurance, 78.07 million in work-related injury insurance, and 48.97 million in unemployment insurance. The total number of migrant workers at the end of 2017 was 286.52 million (According to a news report titled Trade Union Members of Migrant Workers Increased from 100 Million to 140 Million, *Workers’ Daily*, April 16, 2018). Another progress was that 40 million migrant workers in the construction industry had participated in work-related injury insurance by 2017 (According to a news report titled Trade Unions’ CPPCC Members Called for the Improvement of Quantity and Quality of Work-related Injury Insurance, *Workers’ Daily*, March 13, 2018).

better welfare, such as income, written contracts, social insurance, and fringe benefits, than those in workplaces with inactive unions or without union presence.

As previously mentioned, the ACFTU actively advocates for urban workers. Since 2006, it has increasingly integrated policy issues related to migrant workers into its policy agenda; therefore, in addition to policy implementation, it has stepped into other policy stages to realize its slogan of “headstream participation” (*yuantou canyu*). From 2006 to 2013, the ACFTU participated in enacting or revising more than 20 laws and regulations involving workers’ rights and interests.¹⁰ From 2014 to 2018, it continued to participate in enacting or revising important laws or regulations, such as the General Rules of Civil Law, Regulations on Unemployment Insurance, Regulation on the Implementation of the Production Safety Law, and Interim Regulation on Human Resources Market. The ACFTU tried to incorporate essential issues related to migrant workers in these activities. When it participated in formulating laws/regulations/policy documents, it made efforts to insert provisions either explicitly referring to migrant workers or implicitly involving them in more general measures. For example, Articles 20, 22, 31, and 50 of the Employment Promotion Law, adopted in August 2007, explicitly include transferring labor from agriculture; Article 95 of the Social Insurance Law, adopted in 2010, stipulates that migrant workers have the right to participate in social insurance. Other important laws, such as the Law on Employment Contracts and the Law on Mediation and Arbitration of Labor Disputes, apply to all labor relations, inherently covering migrant workers. In recent years, the ACFTU has participated in enacting and implementing policies regarding supply-side reform and has facilitated the reemployment of laid-off workers, including migrant workers.

The ACFTU’s change can also be found in the policy evaluation stage. When it lobbied for

¹⁰ See an online report of the ACFTU’s achievements from 2003 to 2013, available at <http://politics.people.com.cn/n/2013/1016/c70731-23225912.html>, accessed March 15, 2015.

or participated in revisions of policies, it would consider the interests of migrant workers. For example, many migrant workers, especially domestic workers, complained that the Work-related Injury Insurance Regulations, adopted by the State Council in 2003, only listed injuries resulting from motor vehicle accidents during commuting time as one type of work-related injuries, excluding many other ordinary accidental injuries during commuting. The ACFTU tried to change that article when it participated in revising the regulations in 2010. The revised version includes injuries from all traffic accidents during commuting, including urban rail transit, ferry, and train transportation, as long as the insureds have no liabilities. For another example, when the ACFTU revised the Regulations Concerning the Labor Protection of Female Workers in 2012—the ACFTU started to lobby for revising the regulations in 1998, it expanded the policy’s applicability to all employers and female workers, including female migrant workers. In response to some public events related to occupational diseases, such as Zhang Haichao’s “opening chest” event in 2009 and the event of “poisonous Apple” exposed in early 2011, the ACFTU made every effort to lobby for revising the Law on the Prevention and Treatment of Occupational Diseases and to affect the revising process. In the revised version adopted at the end of 2011, the law stipulates for the first time that trade unions have the right to monitor the prevention and treatment of occupational diseases.¹¹ In 2015, the ACFTU, the MOH, the MOHRSS, and the former State Administration of Work Safety revised and promulgated the Occupational Hazards Directory. In recent years, the

¹¹ Zhang Haichao was a migrant worker from Henan province. Because he was denied the disease of pneumoconiosis or dusty lungs caused by working in a factory producing construction materials and therefore could not obtain compensation, he voluntarily received surgery opening his chest to take lung samples to prove his pneumoconiosis. However, the bloody surgery was not necessary for diagnosing the disease. After media exposure, it triggered nationwide anger and became a public event. In 2008, one of Apple Inc.’s suppliers in Suzhou used hexane, a poisonous solvent, to clean products without protecting workers. As a result, 137 workers displayed symptoms of toxicosis. However, Apple refused to publicize the names of its suppliers and stayed aloof from the event. In 2010, 36 Chinese environmental organizations questioned Apple’s misbehavior. Apple eventually admitted that the supplier had connections with it and confirmed the event in February 2011, which led to intensive public criticism in China. The ACFTU started to advocate for revising the Law on the Prevention and Treatment of Occupational Diseases in 2006. The most influential motion was that 43 trade unions’ CPPCC members submitted a jointly signed proposal in 2010, calling for revising the law. These public events significantly facilitated the ACFTU’s motions. In 2011, the NPC finally decided to revise the law and adopted the revisions in the same year.

ACFTU further proposed revising the Labor Law, the Labor Dispute Mediation and Arbitration Law, Regulations on Labor Security Supervision, and Provisions on Minimum Wages. It also advocated for establishing labor courts in the country. In 2020, it participated in revising the Production Safety Law and the Vocational Education Law. One critical motion was to propose and draft the Trade Union Law revisions. The NPC adopted the new law in 2021. It extends the ACFTU's function to serving workers and confirms its multiple mechanisms for workers' rights protection.

Most importantly, the ACFTU has increasingly played an active role in the stage of agenda-setting regarding policies related to migrant workers. Since 2006, NPC representatives and CPPCC members from trade unions have submitted proposals yearly regarding migrant workers, many of which proposed new policies. For example, to reduce serious wage arrears, a longstanding problem for migrant workers, CPPCC members of the ACFTU consecutively proposed to list "malicious wage nonpayment" (*eyi qianxin*) as a crime in the Criminal Law from 2006 to 2010. In 2011, the NPC promulgated Amendment VIII to the Criminal Law, including and detailing "malicious wage nonpayment" and stipulating relevant penalties. Ten years after organizing migrant workers into trade unions, the rates of signing employment contracts and participating in work-related injury insurance had risen but stayed at unfavorable levels. These were worse in the construction industry, with 45 million employees, more than 80% of whom were migrant workers.¹² In early 2014, the ACFTU joined the CPPCC's special investigation on work-related injuries in the construction industry and discovered various problems. At the CPPCC's biweekly deliberative symposium¹³

¹² According to the annual survey data of the National Bureau of Statistics, by the end of 2013, 41.3% of all migrant workers had signed employment contracts with their employers, and 28.5% of migrant workers who worked outside their original towns had participated in work-related injury insurance, the highest participation rate among the five types of insurance required by the Social Insurance Law. In the construction industry, less than 25% of workers participated in work-related injury insurance, albeit it is one of the industries suffering from severe and frequent work-related accidents and injuries. See a report on www.worker.cn, <http://acftu.worker.cn/34/201503/11/150311071542114.shtml>, accessed March 15, 2015.

¹³ The biweekly deliberative symposium was CPPCC's platform to deliberate on important political and policy issues. It was

held in November 2014, the ACFTU discussed these problems with officials from multiple State Council ministries and agreed with them. In the next month, the MOHRSS, the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development (MOHURD), the ACFTU, and the State Administration of Work Safety jointly issued Opinions on Well Furthering the Work Concerning Work-related Injury Insurance in the Construction Industry. It includes many new policy measures to expand the coverage of work-related injury insurance in the industry and to make it easier for workers to obtain compensation. Since 2016, the ACFTU has actively advocated enacting the Collective Negotiation Law, Regulations on Guaranteeing Payment of Wages, and national legislation on trade unions' supervision of the implementation of labor laws and democratic management of enterprises. Like other mass organizations, the ACFTU has the power to issue policy documents either by itself or with other authorities. For instance, in 2015, the ACFTU issued the Circular Concerning Well Resolving Wage Arrears of Migrant Workers; in 2016, the ACFTU and nine other government agencies jointly issued Opinions on Strengthening the Work of Preventing and Treating Migrant Workers' Pneumoconiosis; In 2020, it promulgated Opinions on Strengthening and Improving Trade Unions' Participation in Legislative Work.

The ACFTU is a federation of local and industrial trade unions. In its policy activities, it often mobilizes this network and seeks support from these unions. Furthermore, it also requires these unions to interact with local or industrial authorities and actively participate in local or industrial policy processes. From 2005 to 2014, local trade unions at the provincial and prefectural levels participated in enacting more than 1,600 local regulations and almost 4,800 other policy documents.¹⁴ From 2014 to 2018, they participated in enacting 1,042 local regulations and 2,616

interrupted by the Cultural Revolution. In October 2013, the CPPCC resumed the platform. The chairperson of the CPPCC presides over every symposium session, each focusing on a particular topic. CPPCC members who are specialized in the topic have the chance to deliberate on it and discuss it with invited experts, other relevant individuals, and officials from relevant CCP or government sectors.

¹⁴ See Sketching the Trade Unions' Achievements in Coordinating Labor Relationships in Recent Years by Applying Thoughts

other policy documents.¹⁵ Since 2006, the ACFTU has increasingly utilized these unions to protect the interests of migrant workers and affect relevant policies at both local and national levels. For example, by the end of 2015, local trade unions had successfully pushed 29 provincial authorities to enact 36 local laws and five regulations regarding collective negotiation.¹⁶

Therefore, the ACFTU can go through all the policy stages as other active state corporatist organizations. Its participation in the policy processes of the Law on Employment Contracts and the Interim Provisions on Labor Dispatch is a typical example of its policy influence (Chang 2017, 84). As one of the actions to protect the interests of migrant workers and urban workers, the CPPCC members of the ACFTU collectively called for enacting the Law on Employment Contracts in 2006. After a heated process of bargaining between the ACFTU, various agencies, and trade associations, the NPC adopted a pro-labor version in 2007, which was a victory for the ACFTU because it realized its primary goals, such as granting all employees individual labor contracts and various labor protection measures (Friedman 2014, 49; Pringle 2015, 217-218; Gueorguiev 2021, 91-93; Jakimów 2021, 132). Doubting its adverse effects on economic growth, some NPC representatives and CPPCC members questioned the scheduled implementation of the law on January 1, 2008. The ACFTU insisted on the schedule and succeeded. In the following years, it lobbied and participated in the NPC's inspections on implementing the law in 2008 and 2011. From the inspections, the ACFTU found severe problems in the labor dispatching practice, an employment arrangement in which workers sign employment contracts with dispatching companies but are dispatched to other employers who, in fact, employ them. Because of ambiguous articles of the law, this employment arrangement was misused in practice, resulting in various

and Methodology of the Rule of Law, the People's Daily, November 19, 2014.

¹⁵ See a report on the ACFTU's website titled Let the "Legal Sunlight" Shine into Hearts of Laborers, available at <http://www.acftu.net/template/10041/file.jsp?cid=222&aid=96990>, accessed March 22, 2019.

¹⁶ According to a news report of an ACFTU symposium focusing on collective negotiation legislation held in December 2015, available at <http://www.acftu.org/template/10041/file.jsp?cid=721&aid=92055>, accessed March 21, 2019.

discrimination against 37 million dispatched workers, including many migrant workers. Accordingly, the ACFTU advocated revising the law in 2010 and submitted an investigation report to the NPC in early 2012. The NPC responded and promulgated a revised version at the end of the year. The revised articles limit the labor dispatching practice to temporary, auxiliary, or substitute job positions and raise the threshold to run a dispatching company (Estlund 2017,48; Huang 2017, 275-276).

To specify new law provisions, the MOHRSS put enacting the Interim Provisions on Labor Dispatch on its agenda. At policy meetings held by the MOHRSS, the ACFTU confronted the ministry and representatives of some enterprises and their associations on a series of critical issues, especially the ratio of dispatched workers in an enterprise's workforce. The ACFTU insisted on a 10% cap for all dispatched workers, while opponents held that the ratio was only for workers in auxiliary positions. To seek backup in the battle, the ACFTU not only held symposiums magnifying the voices of supportive experts but also mobilized the masses of workers through local and industrial unions to convey their opinions to the government. Moreover, it created columns in affiliated media outlets, such as the Worker's Daily and www.worker.cn, to expand the social impact of trade unions' standpoints, a rare action for a mass organization. These efforts paid off eventually. The final version of the policy document, promulgated in December 2013, includes many of the trade unions' proposals, including the 10% cap for all dispatched workers (Huang 2017, 277; Feng 2019, 90). The ACFTU then monitors the implementation of the provisions¹⁷.

In the cases presented above, the ACFTU clearly showed its inclination to represent the

¹⁷ Pan's (2016) and Feng's (2019) research shows that these labor dispatch regulations had limited success due to problematic enforcement in practice. Whether the ACFTU will take new actions to strengthen the implementation or push for policy changes deserves further observation.

interests of migrant workers by connecting them to the government, articulating their opinions, and influencing policies based on these opinions. In addition to frequent local or topical surveys/investigations of migrant workers, the ACFTU has integrated the issue of migrant workers into its regular “surveys of conditions of workers,” conventional nationwide surveys the ACFTU has conducted roughly every five years since 1982. In February 2011, it publicized a survey report on 100 million “migrant workers of the new generation (*xinshengdai nongmingong*),” born after 1980. The report proposes systematic policy reforms to address critical problems they have met, including salaries, social insurance, housing, education, and household registration.¹⁸ In 2015, the ACFTU conducted another comprehensive theoretical research on the status quo of migrant workers. In the next two years, it conducted two rounds of nationwide surveys of migrant workers’ employment, household registration, and urban integration and a one-round survey of people working in new professions, new modes, and new technologies in the digital age, many of whom are migrant workers. In 2018 and 2019, it conducted two surveys of workers’ participation in social insurance. Since 2015, the ACFTU has started to use multiple forms of internet media to connect and serve grassroots workers. In 2016, as a measure of organizational reform required by the CCP central leadership, it established a Social Liaison Department and assigned connecting and guiding labor organizations to this department. Public procurement projects also increased (Jakimów 2021, 85-86). In 2018, the ACFTU allowed representatives of its National Congress to submit policy proposals for the first time.

However, like other active state corporatist organizations, the interest representation of the ACFTU has limitations. Its bureaucratic working style and overlong administrative chains result in the negligence of or slow response to some demands of workers. In addition, it inherently cannot

¹⁸ Ngai and Lu’s (2010) research delves into subjective experiences, life struggles, and collective actions of this new generation of migrant workers.

meet those demands conflicting with the state's interests (Friedman and Lee 2010, 521-523). Chen (2003) finds that trade unions alienate themselves from workers as labor contentions escalate. They mediate spontaneous collective actions of workers and forestall any independent organizing of workers. Even the services provided by trade unions, such as legal aid, must be constrained within certain boundaries, and unions shun politically sensitive cases (Gallagher 2007, 203-207; Pringle and Clarke 2011, 122; Pringle 2015, 225). Overall, trade unions remain a part of the state apparatus, and their role cannot be at odds with the state's interests (Chen 2003, 1025).

Almost all leaders of bottom-up labor organizations the author interviewed complained that trade unions usually stood together with employers and governments in severe labor disputes/unrests. Jakimów (2021, 82) also notes that the ACFTU branches in enterprises hardly see their interest in opposing employers. From 1978, trade unions across the country supported merely one strike, which took place in Shandong province in 2013.¹⁹ In thousands of strikes that occurred in recent years²⁰, trade unions were intensively blamed for opposing workers or nonfeasance. For example, in those large-scale strikes such as the “Nanhai Honda company strike” in 2010 and the “Dongguan Yue Yuen shoe factories strike” in 2014, and those widely attended events related to labor, such as a series of migrant worker suicides by jumping off buildings in Shenzhen Foxconn in 2010, trade unions in enterprises did not represent the interests of workers and were distrusted and even abandoned by workers (Liu 2011, 158; Pringle and Clarke 2011, 65; Ngai and Chan, 2012; Chan and Hui, 2012; Friedman 2014, 140-148; Pringle 2015, 230; Ngai 2016, 105-133, 161-165; Chang 2017, 58; Schmalz et al., 2017; Fu 2018, 32-33; Chan et al. 2020,

¹⁹ See the text of a report of Radio Free Asia on July 31, 2013, available at <https://www.rfa.org/mandarin/yataibaodao/renquanfazhi/cyl-07312013104622.html>, accessed March 20, 2015. Also see Winn (2018, 1859).

²⁰ According to the Strike Map of the China Labor Bulletin located in Hong Kong, 14,911 strikes occurred in China from January 2012 to December 2022. In 2015 and 2016, 2,775 and 2,670 strikes broke out, respectively, making a peak in this period. The online interactive map is at <https://maps.clb.org.hk/strikes/en#>.

113-123, 133-134; Jakimów 2021, 175-177; Lin 2021, 269, 271). Although trade unions at higher levels intervened and appeased workers to some extent in all three cases, their primary purpose was to realize the state's cause of stability maintenance (Jakimów 2021, 83).” In 2018, the ACFTU remained aloof from Shenzhen Jasic (Jiashi) Technology workers' protests for establishing a labor union and following crackdowns on sympathetic college students and activists, including Shen Mengyu, Yue Xin, Zheng Yongming, and Gu Jiayue (Chan, 2020; Chan et al. 2020, 129-130; Lam 2020, 210; Elfstrom 2021, 104; Jakimów 2021, 169; Qiaoan 2022, 131). In the same year, the ACFTU even enacted Classification Standards for Workers' Mass Incidents and the Interim Measures for Trade Unions' Prevention and Handling of Workers' Mass Incidents to facilitate stability maintenance. In his work report for 2018, Li Yubin, party secretary and vice chairman of the ACFTU of the time, accentuated preventing inciting and destructive “hostile forces” and striking independent or civil trade unions.²¹ Similar words also appeared in Wang Dongming's work report at the ACFTU's Seventeenth National Congress and several other addresses.²² An important goal in strengthening connections with labor organizations is to monitor and control them. As stated in Opinions of the ACFTU on Promoting Trade Unions' Work of Connecting and Guiding Social Organizations in the Field of Labor Relations issued by the ACFTU in December 2016, two of six basic working principles are to assist relevant government agencies in guiding and monitoring internal governance, operational activities, and external relations of these organizations, and only to cultivate and support politically reliable organizations with clear

²¹ Li presented this report at an ACFTU conference on February 13, 2019. It is available at <http://www.acftu.net/template/10041/file.jsp?cid=222&aid=97867>, accessed March 21, 2019.

²² The Seventeenth National Congress was held in October 2018. The report is available at <http://www.acftu.org/template/10041/file.jsp?cid=222&aid=97209>, accessed March 22, 2019. In April 2020 and January 2022, Wang Dongming emphasized this work in his two addresses, available at https://www.acftu.org/wjzl/ldjh/wdm/202009/t20200907_313390.html?7OkeOa4k=qAcbrArUIKbZyLBkTsavTY28hztMUwU5jGBzV4xxx89qqiG5ZAboqAqqSA and https://www.acftu.org/wjzl/ldjh/wdm/202202/t20220211_804065.html?7OkeOa4k=qAqZrAqUV1vZN7Xk2p2HbBYyC3LXuD77vdhM6XINQdlqqiG5ZAboqAqqkA, accessed March 22, 2023.

backgrounds. In short, facilitating the Party-state is the primary goal of the ACFTU, regardless of traditional urban workers or migrant workers (Chen 2004, 30; Zhang and Smith 2009, 70; Estlund 2017, 44-47).

4.3 Bottom-up Organizations for Migrant Workers

Although their founding was not a result of the attitude change of the ACFTU toward migrant workers, the naissance of most bottom-up organizations in this field was after 2003, meaning that they generally did not provide services to and represent migrant workers earlier than the ACFTU. As Zhou (2016, 147-148) argues, the previous underdevelopment of migrant workers' organizations could be attributed to insufficient political, financial, and moral resources. The unprecedented development of migrant workers' organizations began in the twenty-first century when the central government relaxed restrictions, international institutions provided financial support, and the public demonstrated extensive attention to and sympathy for this underprivileged group. Unlike their women's field counterparts, many of these organizations usually do not use the ACFTU as a proxy organization to fulfill their goals, including policy goals, although they neither stand on the opposite side. As discussed later, the only two exceptional cases are the Beijing Zhicheng Migrant Workers' Legal Aid and Research Center (Zhicheng) and the Beijing Yilian Legal Aid and Research Center of Labor (Yilian), which maintain closer relationships with the ACFTU. Some creators or major leaders of these organizations are migrants-turned activists, while others are sympathetic elites or concerned professionals (Lee and Shen 2011, 175; Jakimów 2021, 19). The former group includes On Action Beijing International Cultural Center (On Action), Beijing Migrant Workers' Home Cultural and Development Center (Migrant Workers' Home), Beijing Social Work Development Center for Facilitators (Facilitator), Little Bird Mutual-Aid Hotline for Migrant Workers (Little Bird), and Hotline for Unhappiness. In addition to Zhicheng

and Yilian, the latter group includes the Fuping Development Institute (FDI), the Charity Fund of Love Save Pneumoconiosis (Love Save Pneumoconiosis), Walking in the World, Brick and Tile Migrant Workers Culture Development Center (Brick and Tile), and New Citizen Program.

In the field of migrant workers, the dominant mode of policy influence for bottom-up organizations is embedded pluralism, while a few organizations fall into the category of silent pluralism. Both categories include organizations founded by migrants-turned activists and sympathetic elites. Only one exceptional website fell into the category of critical pluralism. The state cracked down on the website, as it did to women's and health organizations identified to adopt critical pluralism. Yilian displayed some signs of critical pluralism in a specific period. However, detailed analysis shows that it cannot be classified into that category.

To sum up, Table 4.1 shows the categorization of policy influence of organizations for migrant workers studied in this research.

Table 4.1 Categorization of the Policy Influence of Social Organizations for Migrant Workers

top-down organization	active state corporatism	the ACFTU after 2006
	passive state corporatism	the ACFTU from 2003 to 2005
	symbolic state corporatism	the ACFTU before 2002
bottom-up organizations	embedded pluralism	On Action, Migrant Workers' Home, Facilitator, Love Save Pneumoconiosis, Walking in the World*, Zhicheng, Yilian
	reduced embedded pluralism	the FDI
	critical pluralism	www.ilabour.org*, Yilian (2011-2015, only some signs)
	silent pluralism	Little Bird, the Hotline for Unhappiness, Brick and Tile, New Citizen Program; five internet websites, including www.jianjiaobuluo.com**

Note: Organizations with "*" ceased working because of state repressions. The organization with "***" experienced state repression but survived for at least a period. It was eventually forced to shut down.

4.3.1 Embedded Pluralism

4.3.1.1 On Action

On Action, founded in 2006, was an organization providing services to migrant workers

relying on volunteers, such as employment information, legal aid, psychological counseling, and various training programs. It established offices in Suzhou and Wuhan in 2008 and 2012, respectively. Compared with other bottom-up organizations, On Action was relatively alienated from the state (Tai 2015, 58-60). Because its founder, Ma Yang, had experience in China's military special forces and was once a Public Security Law violator, and because the organization built connections with multiple foreign organizations and accepted most of its funding from abroad (Tai 2015, 114), the police closely monitored the organization and its leader. To survive, On Action maintained a low profile and obeyed orders and directions from the police. It holds memberships of several organizations with official backgrounds to reinforce its legitimacy, although these organizations did not provide substantive help.²³

While most of its activities involved service provision, influencing policies has been an essential goal since its founding.²⁴ Consistent with its survival strategy, its mode of policy influence falls into the category of embedded pluralism. It never adopted radical approaches and tried avoiding politically sensitive issues and building coalitions to influence policies. Although On Action had difficulties establishing close relationships with the official system, it sought opportunities to channel into official institutions utilizing informal relationships. For example, one of its board members was a doctoral student in the School of Labor and Personnel at Renmin University. Utilizing this relationship, it invited the school's vice dean to be its board's president. When the MOHRSS and the ACFTU drafted the Law on Employment Contracts, the vice dean was appointed deputy supervisor of the drafting group as an expert. On Action organized a series of symposiums regarding the law and submitted many proposals to the vice dean, who transferred

²³ The author's interview with Ma Yang on June 8, 2012, in Beijing.

²⁴ According to the author's interview with Ma Yang, On Action realized the importance of influencing policies from the outset. Ma Yang held a view that only policy changes could lead to comprehensive changes in the environment. He provided stories of himself, his organization, and details of On Action's policy participation.

them to the drafting group. Eventually, some ideas in these proposals appeared in the law's final version, such as the punishment equal to double salaries for employers that do not sign employment contracts with employees and workers' right to apply for payment orders from courts in cases of wage arrears. From 2010 to 2012, for another example, On Action submitted a proposal to include migrant workers in allocating indemnificatory housing through acquainted NPC representatives and CPPCC members for three consecutive years. According to Ma Yang, On Action built connections with about 30 NPC representatives or CPPCC members through various informal channels. When the authorities solicited public opinions on some policies, On Action also submitted proposals by mail or email. However, the influence of this way was usually minimal.

On Action conducted two surveys of migrant workers every year on average. Some were publicized, while others were not for complicated reasons. For example, it surveyed workers working on Beijing Olympic projects in 2007. The results of the survey invited tremendous pressure from the police. Consequently, the report was kept covered. At the end of 2008, it conducted surveys of migrant workers who were returning home because of the financial crisis at two train stations located in Beijing and Suzhou (Tai 2015, 37). Since 2008, it consecutively conducted surveys of migrant workers' living conditions in Beijing. In 2016, its Wuhan office conducted surveys of wage payments in construction workers, and its Beijing office implemented a legal aid project among female textile workers in Daxing District.

In 2014, On Action registered with the Beijing Bureau of Civil Affairs and changed its name to Beijing Zhong He Social Work Institute. From then on, it gradually transferred to the field of social work and conducted multiple service projects for different district governments in Beijing. As it strengthened relationships with the official system, it has increasingly embraced the official agenda. For example, it sent an open letter under the name of On Action to the UN Economic and

Social Council in 2020, requesting to withdraw New York-based Human Rights Watch's consultative status with the council.²⁵ This action coincided with the official standpoint of the Chinese government.

4.3.1.2 Migrant Workers' Home

Sun Heng created a troupe of young migrant workers in 2002, which later developed into Migrant Workers' Home. Nowadays, it has become a comprehensive organization that encompasses multiple institutions and provides different services to migrant workers: the troupe is still active and makes performance tours in different parts of the country every year (Jakimów 2021, 71); Tongxin Experimental School is an elementary school providing education to migrant children; Migrant Workers' Museum was the first and the only museum in China that recorded and exhibited the history of China's migrant workers²⁶ (Fu 2018, 129-131); Tongxin Training Center provides professional training to young migrant workers; Tongxin Reciprocal Stores and Tongxin Farm generate supporting revenues for the organization. Migrant Workers' Home organized various cultural events to magnify the voices of migrant workers, making it a well-known organization for migrant workers in China and abroad. In 2017, Fan Yusu, a member of its literature group, published an online autobiographical article titled "I Am Fan Yusu," which became a famous and influential work in China.

Migrant Workers' Home also adopts a non-critical attitude toward the state and seeks cooperation with official institutions (Jakimów 2021, 83). For example, it has built connections with the ACWF, the CCYL, the Beijing Trade Union, the Beijing Volunteer Federation, and the Chaoyang District Cultural Center. The latter two institutions provided Migrant Workers' Home

²⁵ The letter is available on its Twitter account at <https://twitter.com/BjOnaction>, accessed March 23, 2023.

²⁶ The museum was forced to close in June 2023 because of a planned demolition of the building. After that, Migrant Workers' Home established a virtual online museum at <https://the-culture-and-arts-museum-of-migrant-labors.com/#1>, accessed December 3, 2023.

with some project funding. It also established China's first community-based trade union in Pi Village, the location of Migrant Workers' Home, with the permission of the Chaoyang District and Jinzhan Township governments (Fu 2018, 136).

Although Migrant Workers' Home has a relatively long history in this field, it has engaged in influencing policies only since 2009. It conducted three surveys of migrant workers and publicized four research reports regarding migrant workers' housing, migrant children's education, and "migrant workers of the new generation." Because the CCYL was also interested in young migrant workers, it invited Migrant Workers' Home to its meetings and sometimes visited its office for field studies. Migrant Workers' Home also sporadically invited the ACWF, the NPC, and officials of the Chaoyang district to visit its office and its different institutions. It used these opportunities to convey opinions on specific policy issues and lobby for appropriate solutions. However, these usually turned out to be one-way communications, i.e., it seldom heard feedback from these official institutions.²⁷

Since 2009, Migrant Workers' Home has continuously provided materials to some migrants-turned NPC representatives and facilitated them to submit proposals regarding migrant children in urban areas, left-behind children (*liushou ertong*) in the countryside, and the spiritual and cultural life of migrant workers. These representatives also exposed these issues and spread their ideas to the whole country through interviews with reporters from the media, including the China Central Television (CCTV).

Migrant Workers' Home has cultivated friendships with some celebrities, such as Cui Yongyuan, a former CCTV anchor and a CPPCC member who sympathizes with migrant workers. In July 2012, the Chaoyang district government launched a campaign to close private schools for

²⁷ The author's interview with Sun Heng on August 6, 2012, in Beijing.

migrant children.²⁸ The district educational administration also forced Tongxin Experimental School to shut down (Jakimów 2021, 226-227). In response to the request of Migrant Workers' Home, Cui Yongyuan united five other social celebrities and sent an open letter to the Minister of Education, calling for preserving the school and reviewing the policy of closing such schools. Traditional and online media reported this event, exerting pressure on the authorities. Eventually, the government restored Tongxin Experimental School but forced many similar schools to close.

According to Sun Heng, his organization often employs such personal relationships to fulfill its goals because it lacks institutionalized channels.²⁹ In November 2017, the Beijing Municipal Government launched an unpopular campaign to expulse the "low-end population," including many migrant workers (Jakimów 2021, 51-52, 208). The campaign also impacted Pi Village and Migrant Workers' Home. The organization delayed the process by inviting various media reporters and researchers to investigate and expose the event. The campaign drew domestic and international condemnations and stopped. Migrant Workers' Home survived again. As Fu (2018, 127, 133) concludes, this organization used the promotion of migrant workers' culture as a point of entry when demanding broader rights for migrant workers. It forged strategic partnerships with political insiders, including government officials, journalists, and scholars. These alliances created a network of political insiders that assisted it in disseminating migrant worker culture and amplifying the voice of migrant workers in policymaking.

4.3.1.3 Facilitator

Founded in 2003, Facilitator also has a relatively long history in this field. This organization specializes in mobilizing, training, and utilizing social workers to provide various

²⁸ In fact, closing private schools for migrant children has been an official policy of the MOE, and Beijing has primarily enforced it since 2011. Although the MOE intends to transfer students to public schools, many students were turned away due to additional fees, limited seats, and stringent preconditions for their parents (Zhou and Cheung 2017, 1335-1336).

²⁹ The author's interview with Sun Heng on August 6, 2012, in Beijing.

services to migrant workers, migrant children, and seniors. These services include poverty relief, psychological counseling, behavior modification, conflict mediation, rights protection, and legal aid.

Unlike Migrant Workers' Home, Facilitator began to pay attention to interest representation and policy influence in its early years. In 2003, it conducted three surveys of migrant workers. The last one, Occupational Safety and Health Conditions of Migrant Workers in Pearl River Delta and the Three Gorges Reservoir Area, was published in the China Youth Daily and attracted the attention of relevant government agencies because surveys of migrant workers were rare at that time. The following year, Facilitator, the State Administration of Work Safety, and Oxfam Hong Kong jointly held a symposium about protecting migrant workers' rights to occupational safety and health (Hsu 2009, 133). It was the first symposium in the field of migrant workers that a bottom-up social organization and a government agency jointly held. Later that same year, Facilitator held another symposium with the former newspaper Rural Edition of the Economic Daily regarding public policy reforms and service innovations concerning migrant workers. Multiple government agencies, international organizations, research institutions, media, social organizations for migrant workers, and representatives of migrant workers attended these symposiums and exchanged their opinions on relevant policy issues. At that time, they served as rare platforms for boosting policy-related discussions between different parties (Froissart 2013, 21-26). In 2005, the reformed rural health care system included occupational diseases of migrant workers. These symposiums played a role in the policy change. In the following years, Facilitator conducted surveys of migrant workers and publicized reports every two years. It sent these reports to multiple agencies, such as the MOCA, the MOH, the MOHRSS, and the State Council. By 2018,

it had promulgated 35 reports and published nine books.³⁰

Every year, Facilitator also invites migrants-turned NPC representatives or CPPCC members to discuss policy issues relevant to migrant workers, including social security, work-related injuries, occupational diseases, and migrant children's education. They delivered Facilitator's propositions to NPC and CPPCC annual meetings. For example, in 2021, its proposal regarding disaster management for migrant workers to the CPPCC received a response from the MOHRSS.

Based on its long-term practice, Facilitator has developed its own mode of social work and successfully extended it to Nanjing, Zhuhai, Qingdao, and Jiangxi Province in 2007, 2009, 2016, and 2019, respectively. It established four partnership organizations in these localities and successfully registered them with local MOCA offices. Facilitator has gradually won governments' trust because it always takes a cooperative attitude, and its work facilitates them to prevent and resolve social conflicts. A leap forward occurred in 2009 when Facilitator finished a research report commissioned by the MOCA regarding social workers' serving migrant workers. It was the first time for the MOCA to designate a research project for a bottom-up social organization. The same year, the MOCA also invited Facilitator to attend its policy meetings, enacting a departmental rule promoting the development of civil social organizations engaged in social work. Facilitator made every effort to propose opening MOCA registration to such organizations. Eventually, the proposal was adopted, and Facilitator registered with the Beijing Civil Affairs Bureau according to the rule in the next year. Before that, Facilitator had registered as a commercial company for seven years. Soon after its registration, the Beijing Civil Affairs Bureau invited Facilitator to participate in designing a scheme concerning the government purchase of services from social organizations,

³⁰ See its introduction on China Development Brief, available at <http://www.chinadevelopmentbrief.org.cn/org305>, accessed April 30, 2019.

including project management, project evaluation, and rating of social organizations. The scheme adopted a large part of Facilitator's proposals. Li Tao, founder and chief of Facilitator, even acquired two official titles from the bureau. Moreover, Facilitator participated in the implementation and evaluation of the scheme. In that year, the Civil Affairs Bureau of Dongcheng District followed suit. It invited Facilitator to design a scheme regarding the government purchase of social workers' services and granted one government purchasing project to Facilitator. In the following years, Facilitator won more and more government purchasing projects, including multiple research projects designated by the MOCA, the Beijing Civil Affairs Bureau, and other agencies. By 2018, it had conducted more than 30 such projects for governments at different levels.³¹ In addition to the MOCA system, Facilitator established good relationships with the ACWF, the CCYL, the Standardization Administration, the MOHRSS, and the Office of the Leading Group for the Work of Migrant Workers of the State Council. These agencies/organizations invite Facilitator to attend their policy-related meetings several times a year and present themselves at Facilitator's annual meetings.³² Cooperating with them, especially the MOCA, Facilitator has participated in enacting or revising a few industrial standards, such as National Performance Evaluation Standards for Social Work Service Projects, Guidance for Community Social Work Services, National Professional Ethics of Social Workers, Occupational Classification System, and Guidelines for Social Work Supervision.

As Facilitator grows into a thriving organization, it has started to support other organizations and people. By 2018, it had provided professional support to more than 39,000 social workers, volunteers, and organizational leaders in various forms of training and consultation.³³ In 2015, the

³¹ See its self-introduction at <http://www.facilitator.org.cn/aboutus/aboutus0>, accessed April 30, 2019.

³² According to the author's interview with Li Tao on April 1, 2012, in Beijing.

³³ See its introduction on China Development Brief, available at <http://www.chinadevelopmentbrief.org.cn/org305>, accessed April 30, 2019.

Beijing Bureau of Civil Affairs even designated Facilitator to manage the Beijing Social Organizations Development Service Center, a former institution within the bureau. Based on this platform, it provides services to more than 4,000 social organizations, a rare operation for a bottom-up organization. In addition, it often participates in training sessions for government officials and staff of official organizations. Gradually, it established a strategic system composed of three sections—creative services, research and advocacy, and professional support.

Although Facilitator maintains good relationships with the official system, it still works independently. According to Li Tao, he once confronted business associations at a meeting discussing the draft of the Law on Employment Contracts held by an expert group at Peking University. In 2006, per the request of more than 20 private schools for migrant children, he contended with officials from the Haidian District Education Committee at a hearing for closing those schools. From 2005 to 2008, to retrieve unpaid wages for 139 migrant workers, Facilitator helped to sue a district labor bureau in Beijing and won the case eventually.³⁴ In recent years, as funds from government sectors increased rapidly, Facilitator intentionally sought more private sources to balance the composition of its income. In 2016, 80% of its annual income came from government purchases, while the proportion dropped to about 50% in 2018 and 35% in 2021.³⁵

4.3.1.4 Love Save Pneumoconiosis

To aid migrant workers suffering from pneumoconiosis and their family members, Love Save Pneumoconiosis originated from a project initiated by Wang Keqin, a former distinguished investigative journalist in China, with the support of the China Social Assistance Foundation under the MOCA in 2011. This project became a sub-fund under the China Social Assistance Foundation,

³⁴ The author's interview with Li Tao on April 1, 2012, in Beijing.

³⁵ See Li Tao's address at Facilitator's 2019 annual meeting. The text is available at <http://www.facilitator.org.cn/aboutus/aboutus100010/news-id/575>, accessed April 30, 2019. Also, see its 2021 annual report at <http://www.facilitator.org.cn/aboutus/aboutus100002/news-id/1127>, accessed March 23, 2023.

then registered as Love Save Pneumoconiosis Service Center in 2017 and Love Save Pneumoconiosis Public Interest Foundation in 2018 with the Beijing Civil Affairs Bureau.

Soon after its founding, Love Save Pneumoconiosis realized that influencing relevant policies must be a primary goal of the organization because the number of migrant workers it could save by providing services was relatively limited compared with the large number of patients in need.³⁶ It made a medium-term work plan aiming to fully include health care and basic subsistence allowances of these patients into public finance and to push governments to enact and implement a series of practically enforceable public policies that will firmly prevent new cases of pneumoconiosis in two decades. In 2012, it established a policy research center, which recruited professional volunteers and more than 20 experts in relevant public policy areas. In the same year, it submitted policy proposals directly to relevant agencies.

Since its founding, Love Save Pneumoconiosis has conducted surveys and investigations of affected families across the country every year. The largest-scale survey was in 2014, resulting in a Survey Report on the Living Conditions of China's Former Migrant Workers with Pneumoconiosis. Because it was the first systematic report on the issue, it received intensive attention in the media and public sectors. Liu Yandong, then vice premier, and Li Jianguo, then chairman of the ACFTU, wrote comments on the report. In 2016, it established a dataset of patients based on surveys. In addition to surveys, Love Save Pneumoconiosis researched relevant public policies in the history of other countries that have successfully eliminated the disease and published five volumes of *Compilation of the International Experience of Confronting Pneumoconiosis from 2016 to 2020*. It also holds symposiums yearly to discover and discuss

³⁶ According to surveys and estimations of Love Save Pneumoconiosis, there are at least six million pneumoconiosis patients in China, 90% of whom were migrant workers. See an introduction on its website at <http://daaiqingchen.org/list.php?fid=92>, accessed May 4, 2019. However, the government never adopted this figure in official reports.

critical issues and policy solutions. It invited representatives of patients to attend some of these symposiums and communicate with the media, experts, government officials, NPC representatives, and CPPCC members. From 2012 to 2022, it had held ten such symposiums.

Although the organization has some official connections, it still needs to seek informal relations to gain access to government agencies and policymakers. It has established connections with many NPC representatives and CPPCC members through referrals of acquaintances and dissemination of traditional media and “we media,” such as microblogs³⁷. Since 2012, Love Save Pneumoconiosis has submitted proposals through these representatives/members at both national and local levels every year. In 2012, only one NPC representative submitted a proposal regarding pneumoconiosis, while Love Save Pneumoconiosis had mobilized more than one hundred NPC representatives and CPPCC members to submit relevant proposals by March 2019.³⁸ Before NPC and CPPCC annual sessions, Love Save Pneumoconiosis regularly invited them to discuss relevant policy issues. During these annual sessions, it usually launched media campaigns to increase public visibility and discussions of the issues. Gradually, even Xinhua News Agency, People’s Daily, and CCTV engaged in reporting relevant issues and Love Save Pneumoconiosis. Consequently, in 2014 and 2015, pneumoconiosis became a hot topic at NPC and CPPCC annual sessions. Li Yuanchao, then vice president of China, listened to opinions and proposals on the issue of pneumoconiosis from some NPC representatives and CPPCC members during the 2014 sessions. In July 2014 and November 2015, the MOH and the MOCA invited Love Save Pneumoconiosis twice to discuss its survey reports and policy proposals. Multiple institutions within the State Council and other agencies, such as the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission (SASAC),

³⁷ See Gleiss (2015) for Love Save Pneumoconiosis’ successful online activism.

³⁸ See an online report of Health Times at <http://www.jksb.com.cn/html/news/hot/2019/0315/134885.html>, accessed May 4, 2019.

the MOHRSS, and the former State Administration of Work Safety, followed suit.³⁹ These efforts of Love Save Pneumoconiosis successfully raised public awareness of pneumoconiosis and turned it into a high-profile policy issue in a few years.

Cooperating with local governments, Love Save Pneumoconiosis has conducted many projects to provide patients with multiple services. Based on good relationships established with local governments, it also regularly lobbies them to enact policies benefiting patients and their families. Policy changes occurred in Shandong Province and a few cities and counties in Gansu, Sichuan, Jiangxi, Hunan, Hubei, Guizhou, Henan, Shaanxi, and Chongqing. These successful examples have further driven more local governments and the central government to change policies.

In 2016, the MOH and nine other agencies/organizations jointly issued Opinions on Strengthening the Work of Preventing and Treating Migrant Workers' Pneumoconiosis. As a milestone for national policy change, this document confirms employers' responsibilities and requires local governments to include relevant drugs in health insurance. One year later, the State Council promulgated the National Plan on the Prevention and Control of Occupational Diseases (2016-2020), which proposes to extend minimum subsistence to eligible families impacted by pneumoconiosis. It implemented another five-year plan (2021-2025) in 2021. At the end of 2017, the MOH established the Committee of Experts for Diagnosing and Treating Pneumoconiosis. In August 2018, Xi Jinping made a particular direction regarding the prevention and control of pneumoconiosis, paving the way for further policy changes. In the next two months, the MOH and multiple other agencies jointly issued two notices of poverty alleviation, which list pneumoconiosis as one of the critical illnesses for special treatment. At the end of the year, the

³⁹ See a Xinhua News Agency reporter's interview with Zhao Ruotong, secretary-general of Love Save Pneumoconiosis, in 2016. The text is available at <http://daaiqingchen.org/bencandy.php?fid=12&id=2552>, accessed May 5, 2019.

Law on the Prevention and Treatment of Occupational Diseases was revised for the fourth time. According to the new law, patients with occupational diseases who cannot confirm their labor relationships may apply for public assistance from such government sectors as civil affairs and healthcare security. In 2019, the MOH enacted the Three-year Action Plan on the Prevention and Treatment of Pneumoconiosis and started to coordinate relevant agencies/organizations to implement the plan. Encouraged by these remarkable achievements, Love Save Pneumoconiosis is further advocating for revising the Regulation on the Prevention and Treatment of Pneumoconiosis, an outdated and inapplicable national policy promulgated by the State Council in 1987.

4.3.1.5 Walking in the World

Li Dajun established the Beijing Xingzai Renjian Culture Development Center (Walking in the World) in 2009. Originating from a joint project of Peking University and The Hong Kong Polytechnic University China Social Work Research Centre, this organization mainly served migrant workers in the construction industry and migrant children in urban areas.

Walking in the World intervened in a rights protection case of migrant workers suffering from pneumoconiosis that occurred in Shenzhen in 2009 and successfully persuaded the local government to provide those workers some relief payments. Furthermore, the MOH and the MOHRSS invited it to discuss the revision of the Law on the Prevention and Treatment of Occupational Diseases.⁴⁰ From then on, Walking in the World continued to work on such issues as work-related injuries, occupational diseases, and wage arrears in the construction industry.

Its methods of influencing policies were similar to those of Love Save Pneumoconiosis. Benefiting from good relations with a few universities, Walking in the World had stable sources of

⁴⁰ See Li Dajun's lecture on his own experience and the work of Walking in the World, presented on a forum in June 2018. The text is available at <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/hrBC3U69jb6lvMhbstyaKQ>, accessed May 15, 2019.

volunteers, mainly students and professors, to conduct surveys/investigations regularly and promulgate research reports. One report regarding the occupational security of migrant workers in the construction industry issued at the end of 2012 received comments from Yu Zhengsheng, then chairman of the CPPCC. Consequently, a relevant proposal containing findings and suggestions from the report became one of the key proposals at the 2014 CPPCC annual session.⁴¹ As this chapter documents previously, joint efforts of the CPPCC and the ACFTU resulted in Opinions on Well Furthering the Work Concerning Work-related Injury Insurance in the Construction Industry promulgated at the end of 2014. This departmental rule adopts Walking in the World's proposal of declining property developers' applications for construction permits without proof of purchasing work-related injury insurance for workers.⁴² In 2015, another widespread report regarding migrant children's enrollment in public schools accelerated public schools' acceptance of migrant children in Beijing. Like Love Save Pneumoconiosis, Walking in the World held many symposiums where construction workers, scholars, social organizations, and government officials communicated with each other. In addition, it facilitated three legal cases of requesting double wages for not signing employment contracts and expanded their influence through media coverage.⁴³ However, some of its policy proposals, such as including the rejection of work-related injury claims in the Criminal Law and abolishing the subcontracting system in the construction industry, were never realized.

Since its founding, Walking in the World established good relationships with the official system. In addition to the abovementioned activities, it cooperated with the China Youth Development Foundation under the CCYL to conduct a Hope Community Project in Beijing to serve migrant children from 2011. In 2014, it won the Lam Woo Outstanding Social Work Award

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ www.advocacyinchina.org recorded some policy activities of Walking in the World. However, a search in May 2019 showed that this website had been closed.

granted by Peking University and The Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

Unexpectedly, unidentified police raided the office of Walking in the World and interrogated its staff in May 2019. Li Dajun was detained in some unknown location. In the same month, the police also detained Liang Zicun, founder of Guangzhou Hope School, Li Changjiang, founder of Shenzhen Qinghu Community School, and Tong Feifei, founder of the Guangdong Mumian Social Work Service Center. These crackdowns happened suddenly, and the reason behind them is still elusive. A volunteer indicated that although they were moderate activists, the authorities might deem their efforts to enlighten grassroots migrant workers a political threat.⁴⁴ Chan (2020, 181) speculates that these repressions were the fallout of the Jasic protests in 2018. Although these activists were released a few months later, Shenzhen Qinghu Community School and Guangdong Mumian Social Work Service Center were forced to shut down in 2019. Walking in the World was not officially forced to close. However, it has ceased working since then. Guangzhou Hope School was the only survivor of the crackdowns.

4.3.1.6 Zhicheng

Zhicheng was the first lawyers' organization to provide legal aid to migrant workers in China. Its founder and director, Tong Lihua, had been an outstanding lawyer and founder of an organization providing legal aid to minors, which will be studied in Chapter Six. In 2005, he stretched to the field of migrant workers by establishing the Beijing Migrant Workers' Legal Aid Station, which registered with the Beijing Civil Affairs Bureau as Zhicheng in 2009.⁴⁵

When he started Zhicheng, Tong employed his relationship with the Beijing Bureau of Justice by lobbying it to subsidize cases his organization would handle. Eventually, he successfully pushed

⁴⁴ See two news reports of Radio Free Asia at www.rfa.org/cantonese/news/ngo-05092019074728.html and www.rfa.org/cantonese/news/ngo-05102019083506.html, accessed June 5, 2019.

⁴⁵ As Chapter Six will introduce, the organizations founded by Tong Lihua formed a group named Zhicheng Public Interest Lawyers later. However, major organizations within the group, like Zhicheng, are still separately registered and managed.

for significant legal reform and obtained guaranteed financial resources from the government (Hsu 2009, 132, 138; Tai 2015, 47-51, 80; Estlund 2017, 70). Tong is also the executive deputy director of the Legal Aid Committee, the director of the Special Committee for the Protection of Minors, and the director of the Legal Affairs Committee in Rural China of the All China Lawyers Association (ACLA), a GONGO under the MOJ managing affairs related to lawyers. Since 2006, Tong prompted the ACLA to establish Migrant Workers' Legal Aid Stations throughout the country. By 2022, more than 40 such stations had been established in 21 provinces.⁴⁶ In 2011, the China Legal Aid Foundation under the MOJ started to provide case subsidies to all these stations.

In addition to these official institutions, Zhicheng maintains good relationships with the ACFTU system (Hsu 2012, 3518). Tong is a member of the ACFTU's Legal Advisory Committee; therefore, he can participate in some of the ACFTU's policy activities. Zhicheng also cooperates with the trade unions in Beijing and several districts to provide migrant workers with legal aid (Becker 2014, 165). Some other official institutions, such as the Beijing Committee of Political and Legal Affairs and the Party School of the Central Committee of the CCP, invited Zhicheng to provide training sessions, in which it obtained opportunities to affect high-ranking officials. Tong Lihua was elected a Beijing Municipal People's Congress representative in 2008 (Fu and Cullen 2011, 28). These provided Zhicheng with some institutional access to policymaking. Tong Lihua and his colleagues received multiple honors from the Party-state: Tong was named Outstanding Communist Party Member of Beijing and was granted the National "May 1" Labor Medal by the ACFTU and the China Youth "May 4" Medal by the CCYL in 2007; On the National Day of 2009, he boarded the float of "rule of law" in the national parade at Tiananmen Square as the only representative of the industry of lawyers; in 2005 and 2012, CCTV granted Tong the Annual Model

⁴⁶ See its self-introduction at <https://zgnmg.org/aid-center/>, accessed March 24, 2023.

of Rule of Law twice; Shi Fumao, the executive director of Zhicheng, also received the National “May 1” Labor Medal in 2009 and Capital Charity Award issued by the Beijing Municipal Government in 2012.

Zhicheng provides legal services to migrant workers in four aspects: legal training, legal counseling, legal aid, and legal research. From frequent interactions with migrant workers, lawyers and staff of Zhicheng understand, collect, and articulate their interests and discover essential policy issues and problems in current laws and regulations. Zhicheng has established a routine to analyze cases it deals with monthly and to conclude monthly analyses every quarter and at the end of every year. Based on these data and analyses, Zhicheng finished numerous research reports and books, including many policy proposals (Tai 2015, 51). In addition, Zhicheng reached out to conduct field surveys and wrote reports accordingly. For example, it conducted a large-scale survey in eight provinces regarding the costs of rights protection for migrant workers from 2003 to 2005, even before the official founding of Zhicheng. In 2007, 2009, and 2010, for another example, Zhicheng conducted three surveys of migrant workers about work-related injuries, which formed a solid practical base for its activities to influence relevant policies. In 2021, when Zhicheng conducted thorough research on labor relations in online food delivery platforms, its lawyers and volunteers even applied for and worked as couriers.⁴⁷ Zhicheng publicized most of these reports through the media and sent some to policymaking institutions, such as the NPC, the State Council, and relevant government agencies.

Providing legal aid in lawsuits is Zhicheng’s leading service. Sometimes, an influential lawsuit facilitates a critical policy change. Xu Yangge vs. Beijing KFC was a typical case (Froissart 2011, 22-24; Froissart 2014, 260-261). In May 2006, Beijing KFC fired Xu Yangge after his 11 years of

⁴⁷ See Zhicheng’s report at <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/FIdsv8K-tESoIDNLIXGMog>, accessed September 16, 2021.

service. To his surprise, he found that KFC was not his direct employer because a labor dispatching company dispatched him to the KFC. Consequently, he could not obtain any compensation. Zhicheng's lawyers helped Xu start the arbitration process. After a defeat, Xu sued Beijing KFC in a local court. However, they also lost the first trial. To turn the scale, Zhicheng held a press conference and invited multiple media and known experts in the field to discuss the issue. Labor dispatching soon became a hot topic in the public eye. The ACFTU also joined in condemning the KFC. In August, KFC announced that it would stop using dispatched workers in the entire country and change all existing dispatched workers to its direct employees. Because of KFC's compromise, Zhicheng and Xu dropped the lawsuit before the second trial. In the following year, as a legal advisor of the ACFTU, Tong Lihua attended policy meetings held by the NPC to discuss the draft of the Law on Employment Contracts. Citing the case, Tong suggested banning labor dispatching or strictly regulating it in the law. Eventually, the law regulated labor dispatching in ten articles in an individual section, which was the first time that China legally regulated the employment arrangement.⁴⁸ In 2013, Zhicheng supported the aforementioned ACFTU's battle in enacting the Interim Provisions on Labor Dispatch and submitted policy proposals.

Zhicheng maintains good relationships with multiple agencies; therefore, they may invite Zhicheng's lawyers to attend their policy meetings from time to time. For example, the MOJ invited Shi Fumao to a meeting when it revised the Provisions on the Procedures for Handling Legal Aid Cases in 2009; in 2009-2010, the MOHRSS invited Tong Lihua to some of its policy meetings discussing the enactment of the Social Insurance Law and the revision of the Regulation on Work-Related Injury Insurance; Wang Fang went to a symposium held by the MOHRSS regarding the revision of the Law on the Prevention and Treatment of Occupational

⁴⁸ Shi Fumao provided the author with the details of Zhicheng's involvement in the case and following lobbying efforts during an interview on April 1, 2012, in Beijing.

Diseases in 2010. Sometimes, the agencies requested Zhicheng to submit written proposals regarding specific policy issues instead of inviting them to attend policy meetings. For example, the Beijing Legal Aid Center under the Beijing Bureau of Justice requested Zhicheng to provide written proposals for Legal Aid Law drafted by the agency in 2013. According to Tai (2015, 33), between 2002 and 2011, Tong Lihua and his colleagues were involved in modifying nearly a dozen national laws and municipal regulations concerning minors and migrant workers. When Zhicheng received no invitations or requests, it tried to influence policies by responding to the solicitation of public opinions or getting its voice heard through the media. Since its founding, Zhicheng has responded to almost all major labor legislation at the national level and Beijing municipal level. Although it has some institutional access, sometimes it still employs personal connections with NPC representatives, CPPCC members, and government officials to influence policies.⁴⁹

Regarding the effectiveness of influence, Zhicheng can only achieve partial success, just like other organizations in the category of embedded pluralism. For instance, based on the aforementioned survey in 2007, Zhicheng suggested the State Council revise the Regulation on Work-Related Injury Insurance to establish a new system that would allow injured migrant workers without insurance to obtain compensation from the Work-Related Injury Insurance Funds, which would have the right to recover the losses from the workers' employers. This design is called the system of advance payment of the Work-Related Injury Insurance Funds. The initiative was not realized until the enactment of the Social Insurance Law in 2010. However, the Regulation on Work-Related Injury Insurance revised in the same year does not include such a system because of discrepancies between different sectors. Consequently, most of Zhicheng's proposals for revising the regulation were not adopted.⁵⁰ In 2011, the MOHRSS promulgated a

⁴⁹ The author's interview with Shi Fumao on April 1, 2012, in Beijing.

⁵⁰ According to the author's interview with a major leader of Zhicheng, the MOHRSS supported the system, while some officials

departmental rule titled Interim Measures for the Advance Payment of Social Insurance Funds, which makes the system more specific. However, the system is still difficult to implement in practice. From 2011 to 2017, Zhicheng spent six years helping a migrant worker win a work-related injury case and obtain advance payment from the social insurance fund. Since 2007, for another instance, Zhicheng called for abolishing the labor arbitration system and strengthening the labor security supervision system almost every year. Regardless of the frequent policy creation and change in the field of labor in recent years, this proposal has been completely neglected. According to Shi Fumao's estimation, only less than 50% of Zhicheng's policy proposals might be adopted.⁵¹

4.3.1.7 Yilian

Another typical case of embedded pluralism in the field of labor is Yilian. Huang Leping, founder of Yilian, was a legal consultant in a state-owned enterprise. After suffering from a work-related injury, he spent three years claiming compensation. In this process, he became a legal expert in work-related injuries and published his first book in 2004 about the practical management of work-related injuries and the rights protection of workers with such injuries. Because the book was the first practical guidance for affected workers in China, Huang soon became a well-known legal expert and a lawyer in the specific field. In 2005, he created the first website focusing on work-related injuries in China, followed by a hotline and a consulting company the next year.

Huang held a notion to resolve social contradictions instead of intensifying them. Later, he put forward a guideline for Yilian emphasizing rights protection and stability maintenance concurrently. In practice, Yilian regularly managed group labor disputes, the headache of

from the Legal Affairs Office of the State Council held the opposite opinion. Although the MOHRSS allied with social organizations and successfully created the system in the Social Insurance Law, they failed to specify it in the Regulation on Work-Related Injury Insurance.

⁵¹ The author's interview with Shi Fumao on April 1, 2012, in Beijing.

governments at all levels⁵², and produced several research reports according to such cases. These accorded with the state's ideological guideline of constructing a harmonious society. In addition, his expertise was rare at that time. Hence, some official institutions soon took notice of Huang and decided to support him. In January 2007, the ACFTU, the MOJ, and the ACLA jointly granted him the title “national outstanding lawyer in protecting workers’ rights.” The ACFTU awarded him the National “May 1” Labor Medal in April. In June, the head of the Beijing Bureau of Justice visited his office and admitted to serving as its sponsoring unit. Yilian officially registered with the Beijing Bureau of Civil Affairs two months later.

In the following years, Huang acquired six official titles respectively from the Jiu San Society, one of the eight legally recognized non-Communist political parties in China, the Haidian District People's Political Consultative Conference, and four GONGOs—the China Association for Labor Studies, Beijing Lawyers Association, Haidian Lawyers Association, and the China Health Insurance Research Association. Huang's membership in the Jiu San Society is particularly beneficial. He submitted multiple policy proposals to the CPPCC and Beijing People's Political Consultative Conference through the Jiu San Society. In 2022, Huang was elected a member of the Central Committee of the Jiu San Society and a representative of the Beijing Municipal People's Congress.

Since 2010, Yilian has obtained stable case subsidies from the China Legal Aid Foundation. Like Zhicheng, multiple official institutions invited Yilian for legal training, including the ACFTU, the MOJ, and the Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development of the State Council. In addition to the official institutions mentioned above, Yilian maintains good relationships with the MOHRSS

⁵² By mid-2017, Yilian had dealt with 112 cases involving ten or more plaintiffs. The most influential one was a group case involving more than 100 migrant workers with pneumoconiosis that occurred in the Fangshan District of Beijing in 2010. See a report of China Comment at <http://www.yilianlabor.cn/xinwen/2017/1770.html> and Huang Leping's blog at http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_7952044b0101ecrr.html, accessed July 1, 2019.

and the MOH and cooperates with the Beijing Trade Union and Haidian District Labor Bureau to provide legal services to migrant and urban workers. Chaoyang District invited Yilian to serve as a third party in complex petition cases in 2018.

Yilian's businesses are generally the same as those of Zhicheng. Unlike Tong Lihua, who straddles several fields, Huang Leping concentrates on the field of labor laws. He believes in developing Yilian into an international think tank on labor laws and has established a research department within Yilian to achieve this goal. Yilian also regularly researches past cases and composes many reports and books, based on which it seeks to influence relevant policies. It conducts field investigations and surveys of migrant workers to collect and articulate their opinions and demands and tries to influence policies according to them.⁵³ For example, it surveyed migrant workers with work-related injuries in 2009 when it was implementing a service project for the China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation and another survey of their rehabilitation, reemployment and social inclusion in 2013; from 2010 to 2013, Yilian conducted two rounds of nationwide surveys of workers with occupational diseases; from 2011 to 2021, it conducted five surveys/investigations of implementing the system of the advance payment of the Work-Related Injury Insurance Funds; in 2019, Yilian surveyed working hours of employees in high-tech industries; in 2020, it conducted a survey of labor rights protection of couriers in Beijing. Yilian usually publicized the resulting survey reports at press conferences to amplify its voice.

When it was possible and necessary, Yilian would also hold symposiums to discuss important policy issues. It invited Officials in relevant agencies, known experts in the field, and multiple media to attend those symposiums; thereby, its voice could reach policymakers. Yilian started to

⁵³ According to Huang Leping's Work Report at Tenth Anniversary (available at <http://www.yilianlabor.cn/xinwen/2017/1800.html>, accessed July 1, 2019), it had published 56 books and produced 15 survey reports by 2017. According to its self-introduction (available at <http://www.yilianlabor.cn/xinwen/2019/1843.html>, accessed June 30, 2019), Yilian had submitted 142 policy proposals by the end of 2018.

hold high-profile symposiums in 2009 when it tried to influence the enactment of the Social Insurance Law. Officials from the NPC, the State Council, the MOHRSS, and the ACFTU attended the symposium. They heard Yilian's six proposals to reform the system of work-related injury insurance, which was a rare honor for a bottom-up social organization established for only two years. In May 2011, Yilian held a symposium discussing implementing the advance payment of the Work-Related Injury Insurance Funds. It invited the MOHRSS and the ACFTU officials and experts from research institutions, such as Tsinghua University and Renmin University. It submitted a written proposal developed from one of the surveys mentioned above to the officials at the symposium. They promised to transfer the proposal and discussion results to their agencies. The following month, the MOHRSS promulgated the Interim Measures for the Advance Payment of Social Insurance Funds. Although this policy document is still too general to be effectively implemented in practice, its promulgation demonstrated that Yilian's efforts were not totally in vain. In 2012, Yilian held a similar symposium to examine its implementation. In 2014, Yilian aided a migrant worker in winning an advance payment from a local insurance fund, setting a legal precedent in China. Other essential symposiums include the following: a joint symposium with www.worker.cn, a website managed by the ACFTU, regarding proposals for revising the Law on the Prevention and Treatment of Occupational Diseases in 2011; a symposium in 2015 to discuss ten gross defects of work-related injury policies; a symposium in 2017 regarding the prevention of work-related injuries in the construction industry; two symposiums in 2019 and 2020 regarding work-related injuries in informal employment; a symposium in 2021 to evaluate ten years of the implementation of the advance payment of the Work-Related Injury Insurance Funds.

Official institutions often invited Yilian to attend policy meetings. By 2018, Yilian had been

invited to participate in enacting or revising 17 laws and regulations in the field of labor⁵⁴, including the Law on Employment Contracts, the Law on Mediation and Arbitration of Labor Disputes, the Social Insurance Law, the Regulation on Work-Related Injury Insurance, and the Law on the Prevention and Treatment of Occupational Diseases. It also participated in formulating/revising local regulations, e.g., the Regulation of Beijing Municipality on Legal Aid, and departmental rules, e.g., the Administrative Measures for Diagnosis and Identification of Occupational Diseases enacted by the MOH and Occupational Diseases Classification and Catalogue enacted by the MOH, the MOHRSS, the ACFTU, and former State Administration of Work Safety. In bottom-up social organizations, Yilian is an exceedingly rare case involved in the official policymaking process to such a degree. Yilian's participation in revising the Regulation on Work-Related Injury Insurance and the Law on the Prevention and Treatment of Occupational Diseases serves as typical examples of this involvement and its mode of policy influence in general.

Yilian and the Revisions of the Regulation on Work-Related Injury Insurance and the Law on the Prevention and Treatment of Occupational Diseases

After Hu Jintao sent the ACFTU the written direction in early 2006, the State Council promulgated Opinions on Solutions to the Problem of Migrant Workers in March, which put forward extending work-related injury insurance to migrant workers. Thus, the MOHRSS, known as the Ministry of Labor and Social Security before 2008, received pressure to revise the Regulation on Work-Related Injury Insurance to specify the State Council's new guidelines. However, experts who knew both the legal affairs and practical situations of migrant workers were rare at that time. Huang Leping emerged as such an expert at the right time.⁵⁵ In March 2007, he

⁵⁴ Beijing Daily, December 29, 2018.

⁵⁵ Huang Leping told the author that he could participate in the policy process because "he is not only a 'villager' who knows the

was invited to attend a policy meeting jointly held by the Legal Affairs Office of the State Council, the MOHRSS, and the ACFTU. His opinions and proposals impressed those officials at the meeting and won their affirmation. From then on, he attended almost all important policy meetings regarding the revision held by relevant authorities. As his assistants, other legal experts of Yilian also obtained opportunities to attend some of these meetings. In addition, Yilian submitted written proposals to the Legal Affairs Office of the State Council per its request in 2009. A high-ranking official in the MOHRSS who oversaw the drafting visited Yilian in July 2010 to listen to the opinions of its experts. After the revised regulation was adopted in December 2010, Huang, instead of government officials, explained the new regulation to the media.

According to Mao Sumei, then executive director of Yilian, the new regulation adopts more than 60% of Yilian's proposals, including repealing the procedural prerequisite of administrative reconsideration, expanding the scope of ascertaining work-related injuries, and raising the compensation standard.⁵⁶ Yilian played a crucial role in saving some provisions favoring employees. For example, the published draft version in July 2009 excluded injuries resulting from motor vehicle accidents during commuting from work-related injuries. Huang Leping explicitly argued against this revision. Because different policymaking authorities held contradictory positions, the restoration of the provision was in danger. To save it, Huang proposed an eclectic proposal that included all non-liability traffic accidents when commuting. This proposal received endorsement from some authorities, such as the ACFTU, and gained dominance. Eventually, the provision was saved with some compromise in the final version of the regulation. However, the revised regulation failed to include some essential proposals of Yilian, and the revision did not

situations of Chinese migrant workers, but an expert who knows 'noble' laws and regulations." (The author's interview with Huang Leping on June 11, 2012, in Beijing.)

⁵⁶ The author's interview with Mao Sumei on June 11, 2012, in Beijing.

satisfactorily meet migrant workers' expectations. Regardless of these flaws, Yilian created a successful example to translate a considerable part of their expectations into legislative text.

Occupational diseases, different from but associated with work-related injuries, are another significant source of health damage to migrant workers. Yilian has handled many cases involving occupational diseases since its founding. At those policy meetings about work-related injuries Huang Leping attended, he repeatedly called for revising relevant policies to strengthen the protection of workers' health. Prodded by Zhang Haichao's "opening chest" event in 2009, the NPC listed revising the Law on the Prevention and Treatment of Occupational Diseases in its 2010 legislative agenda and designated the MOH as the major drafter of the revision.

Yilian soon reacted to the opening of this policy window by submitting its systemic proposals to the MOH, the MOHRSS, and the ACFTU in January 2010. The MOH, trusting Huang's expertise, invited him to all its relevant policy meetings. However, it turned out that contradictions between different agencies were more severe in revising this law; thereby, Yilian could not exert as much influence as it did in revising the Regulation on Work-Related Injury Insurance. After shelving the draft for six months, the Legal Affairs Office of the State Council publicized it to solicit public opinion in November 2010. Before that, Yilian submitted another revision proposal to the office.⁵⁷

However, this draft version disappointed Yilian and many others because it failed to reflect the major demands of migrant workers. Therefore, Yilian planned to push for the improvement of the revision in 2011. In addition to persuading policymakers face to face, it must take other measures. In January 2011, the NPC invited Huang to discuss further revision of the law. He expressed dissatisfaction with the draft and his suggestions for improvements at the meeting. In

⁵⁷ According to the author's interview with Huang Leping on June 11, 2012, in Beijing.

February 2011, Yilian finished the abovementioned survey regarding occupational diseases and publicized the resulting report through a press conference. Because the report was based on detailed first-hand data and exposed dramatic difficulties migrant workers faced in obtaining compensation and acute flaws of the system for the prevention and control of occupational diseases, it generated social percussions and put the issue in the spotlight. The NPC and the MOH successively invited Yilian to explain the report and discuss the revision in late February and March. During the annual sessions of the NPC and the CPPCC in March, Yilian delivered its report and proposals to multiple NPC representatives and CPPCC members. Huang Leping employed his personal relationships with NPC representatives within the Jiu San Society to unite as many representatives as possible.⁵⁸ Some NPC representatives and CPPCC members in their respective standing committees openly supported Yilian by submitting official proposals to the sessions and recommending Yilian's report to the media. On March 22, the NPC invited Huang Leping and Mao Sumei to attend an important symposium about revising the law again. From then on, Yilian was the only bottom-up social organization the NPC invited to participate in the revision process.⁵⁹ Although Yilian gained direct access to policymakers, it still insisted on appealing to external forces to amplify its voice. In May, Huang received an interview in a notable CCTV program to comment on the draft of the State Council. In the same month, Yilian held the abovementioned joint symposium with www.worker.cn, at which it publicized three new research reports on occupational diseases. More than 400 media outlets in China published the news of the symposium released by the Xinhua News Agency. Another wave of intensive public discussions of the issue followed.

⁵⁸ As Huang and Mao admitted during the interviews, Yilian used personal connections in its lobbying activities. In addition to the example mentioned here, Yilian submitted proposals regarding production safety, occupational diseases, and maternity insurance to the Beijing People's Political Consultative Conference through the president of its board, who was a member of the institution. Yilian also employed its relationships with officials in various government agencies to influence policies.

⁵⁹ According to the author's interview with Huang Leping on June 11, 2012, in Beijing.

In June 2011, the Standing Committee of the NPC deliberated on the draft for the first time. Yilian cooperated with another notable CCTV program to arrange a special show on the issue. As the only guest speaker in the TV show, Huang Leping called for more aggressive revisions of the law. Although he could still attend some NPC meetings discussing the law, Yilian was excluded from the plenary sessions of the Standing Committee of the NPC according to the official rule. To persuade more representatives, Yilian mailed more than 170 copies of a new systematic proposal to the chairperson, vice chairpersons, and all members of the NPC Standing Committee on August 18, an action that had never happened in the history of the PRC. On October 18, Yilian mailed a supplementary proposal to more than 90 members of the NPC Standing Committee. Multiple media outlets reported these rare actions taken by a grassroots social organization. Han Qide and Yan Juanqi, two vice chairpersons of the NPC, and various members positively commented on Yilian's proposals. Some members even directly referred to Yilian's proposals when deliberating on the law. Consequently, the script of the law after the second deliberation included a part of Yilian's proposals.⁶⁰

However, the revised law script was still below Yilian's expectations. Several days after the second deliberation, Huang received an interview with CCTV for the third time, in which he pointed out the improvements and deficiencies of the script and proposed further revisions. At the end of October, Yilian held another symposium. It invited well-known experts to endorse its propositions, and multiple media also attended and reported the symposium. In December, the National People's Congress of China, the official journal of the Standing Committee of the NPC, published an article about Yilian's participation in the legislative process and Huang's primary proposals. Some committee members informed Huang before the third deliberation⁶¹. On

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ According to the Legislation Law, an act on the legislative agenda of the NPC Standing Committee usually needs three

December 22, Yilian mailed a third proposal to more than 30 members of the NPC Standing Committee. After the third deliberation on December 27, Huang explained the new script to the most important official media, including CCTV, People's Daily, and the Xinhua News Agency. On the last day of 2011, the Standing Committee of the NPC passed the revised Law on the Prevention and Treatment of Occupational Diseases. The final version adopted fifteen proposals Yilian submitted while turning down another ten.⁶²

According to Mao Sumei, Yilian's influence on these two policies was obviously higher than its influence on other laws and regulations in the field. For example, Yilian was also invited to attend policy meetings regarding enacting the Law on Employment Contracts. However, the adopted proposals Yilian submitted were much fewer than those for these two policies. Yilian was not invited to participate in enacting the Social Assistance Law. Instead, it submitted proposals when the State Council openly solicited public opinions.⁶³ Yilian specializes in managing cases of work-related injuries and occupational diseases, which determines its influence on relevant policies.⁶⁴ Although Yilian's effectiveness in influencing policies is moderate, it creates another typical example of embedded pluralism.

Yilian took a few actions similar to critical pluralism in a certain period. In July 2011, two bullet trains collided severely in Wenzhou, Zhejiang Province. Yilian realized from consulting phone calls that the compensation basis, Article 33 of the Regulation on the Emergency Rescue, Investigation, and Handling of Railway Traffic Accidents implemented in 2007 conflicted with the

deliberations before a vote. Those acts that receive relatively accordant assent from committee members may require only one or two deliberations.

⁶² The author's interview with Mao Sumei on June 11, 2012, in Beijing.

⁶³ According to Mao Sumei, the legislative process of this law had stopped because of discrepancies between different agencies. The State Council issued Interim Measures for Social Assistance in 2014 as a temporary regulation.

⁶⁴ The author's interview with Mao Sumei on June 11, 2012, in Beijing.

Tort Liability Law adopted in 2009, which stipulates higher compensation levels. As a response, Huang Leping, Mao Sumei, and another colleague sent a letter to the NPC suggesting a legality review of the article. In August, Yilian held a symposium to discuss the compensation problems in the accident. Afterward, three Yilian lawyers united two other lawyers and two law professors to send a jointly signed letter to the State Council, calling for revising the article. In fact, victims and their families of the accident received compensation according to the Tort Liability Law instead of the regulation. In December 2012, Yilian received a formal letter from the NPC specifying that the State Council had erased Article 33 from the regulation the month before.

Encouraged by the success of this action, in February 2013, three lawyers of Yilian applied to the Ministry of Land and Resources to disclose detailed results of a nationwide examination of urban groundwater conducted by the ministry in 2011. In March, Yilian received more than 400 pages of the data collected from the examination. Although the raw data did not present intelligible explanations, it was the first time the ministry disclosed detailed information on a large-scale examination of groundwater. In 2012, it only publicized a one-page summary of the examination. In 2014, these three lawyers again applied to the Ministry of Land and Resources to disclose regular monitoring data of urban groundwater in 2012 and 2013. However, this time, they only received ambiguous answers.

In June 2013, Huang Leping launched another similar action. The Ministry of Agriculture approved importing three types of transgenic soybeans that month, triggering intensive public criticism. Huang applied to the Ministry of Agriculture to disclose information on five issues regarding the importation of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). In July, the Ministry publicized safety assessment documents of the three types of transgenic soybeans on its website and later sent Huang a written response. The response asked Huang to refer to information on its

website regarding three of the five issues while refusing to answer the other two issues. Dissatisfied with the response, Huang applied for administrative reconsideration to the Ministry in August. However, the Ministry turned down his application in October with the excuse that what Huang had applied was counseling and beyond the standard category of government information disclosure. Considering it an unacceptable excuse, Huang sued the Ministry at the Third Intermediate People's Court of Beijing in November. After communicating with the court for a long time, the court accepted the case and held the first trial in April 2015. However, it decided to dismiss Huang's claims. Huang appealed to the Beijing High Court immediately. It rejected the appeal and sustained the original judgment in July 2015.

In these three cases, Yilian employed some relatively aggressive approaches to influence policies, such as writing letters directly to relevant authorities, applying for disclosure of government information and administrative reconsideration, and filing administrative lawsuits. In so doing, Yilian showed some signs of critical pluralism. However, Yilian cannot be categorized into critical pluralism. It did not show other key characteristics of critical pluralism, such as taking a critical attitude toward the state, being involved in politically sensitive issues, and relying more on building coalitions. In addition, these actions were sporadic, and none of them involved migrant workers, the mainstream constituents Yilian represents. Although Yilian went beyond its usual working area and tackled other policy problems, it carefully chose those that were not politically sensitive and conducted risk assessments before taking each action. The most politically sensitive case mentioned above was the bullet train accident because the public intensively questioned the government's responsibilities in the accident and the rescuing process. However, Yilian intentionally avoided these issues and focused on the legal issue of compensation, which freed

Yilian from any political troubles.⁶⁵ Furthermore, Yilian did not take similar actions before 2011 or after 2015. Since “the 709 Crackdown” in July 2015, Yilian has stopped aggressive actions. In general, Yilian consistently embodies those typical characteristics of embedded pluralism.

4.3.1.8 The FDI: Reduced Embedded Pluralism

Founded by Mao Yushi and Tang Min, two renowned Chinese economists, the Fuping Development Institute (FDI) started training domestic workers in 2002 and has grown into a group of social enterprises incorporating training and employment of domestic workers, early education, microfinance, and eco-agriculture. In addition, the FDI invests in and fosters new social enterprises and nurtures social innovators. Unlike other bottom-up social organizations in the field of migrant workers, the FDI as a whole may be identified as a poverty alleviation group of social enterprises rather than an ordinary organization focusing on migrant workers. The two subfields under the FDI relating to migrant workers are domestic workers, mainly composed of migrant women, and early education accepting migrant children/left-behind children. The FDI has no record of influencing policies in the latter subfield, while in the former subfield, it applies the mode of embedded pluralism to influence policies.

The reputation and personal connections of the FDI’s founders and board members are essential to its development. It has cooperated with local governments to recruit students since its early years. In 2003, the Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development of the State Council, the World Bank, the Ford Foundation, and the FDI jointly held a symposium in Beijing to introduce and evaluate the FDI’s new mode of “civilian-run and public-assisted (*min ban gong zhu*)” training system. Since then, the government has endorsed this new mode. In 2008, when the financial crisis swept China and organizational revenues dwindled, Tang Min wrote a report to the State Council

⁶⁵ The author’s interview with Mao Sumei on June 11, 2012, in Beijing.

based on the FDI's practice, calling for government subsidies for supporting the industry of domestic services to promote employment during the crisis.⁶⁶ After high-level officials commented on the report, the MOC, the MOF, and the ACFTU created a project promoting domestic services in August 2008, which subsidized every new employee in the industry more than 1,000 yuan. The FDI immediately benefited from the project by receiving 1.3 million yuan of subsidies. Since then, the project has become a national policy, according to which domestic workers in China receive more than one billion yuan of subsidies from the central government annually. Since 2009, the Beijing Bureau of Human Resources and Social Security has also begun subsidizing the FDI to train domestic workers. In addition to direct subsidies, the FDI acquired a government purchasing project from the Dongcheng District Family Planning Committee in 2013 and negotiated cooperation with the Dongcheng District Bureau of Human Resources and Social Security to establish a new training center in the district in 2014.

Occasionally, relevant government agencies invited the FDI to discuss policy issues concerning domestic services. For example, the MOHRSS invited the FDI to participate in revising the National Vocational Standards for Domestic Workers in 2013; in 2014, the same ministry invited the FDI to attend a symposium discussing the standardization of the domestic services industry and the professionalization of domestic workers. As a pioneer in the industry, the FDI set a few precedents and influenced peer groups through their trade association—the Beijing Homemaking Service Association. Since 2002, the FDI has started purchasing insurance for its domestic workers. It also set a precedent for days off and acquiring double-time payments for domestic workers on official holidays. Although these have not yet become public policies, many other companies in the industry have followed suit.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Tang Min himself is a counselor of the State Council.

⁶⁷ See its self-introduction at <http://www.fdi.ngo.cn/zuoshenme/community-anddomestic-services>, accessed June 8, 2015.

However, compared with other bottom-up social organizations for migrant workers studied before, the FDI's policy influence is on a reduced scale. It focuses on providing services in its daily work and does not systematically pay attention to policy issues. It actively influenced policies only when meeting policy-related difficulties in its daily work. The FDI encountered difficulties recruiting students in rural areas in 2002. It was Shen Dongshu, the current president of the FDI, who persuaded some local governments with the motivation of relieving local poverty to cooperate with the FDI and eventually created the mode of a "civilian-run and public-assisted" training system. Tang Min wrote the report to the State Council in 2008 when the FDI encountered financial difficulties. Still, those precedents in the industry mentioned above stemmed from hardships its domestic workers had experienced in daily practice. The FDI neither regularly studies policy issues regarding migrant workers nor constitutes work plans to influence relevant policies. Although the government occasionally invited it to policy meetings, it did not play an important role and usually would not follow up. In general, the FDI initiated policy actions infrequently and seldom communicated with other bottom-up organizations for migrant workers, not to mention cooperation. As the next chapter will discuss in detail, more similar cases emerge in the field of disability. This mode of policy influence is classified as a subcategory of embedded pluralism and named "reduced embedded pluralism."

The FDI registered the Leping Social Entrepreneur Foundation with the Beijing Civil Affairs Bureau in 2010. Since 2014, it has used this foundation to coordinate all its institutions and projects. Consequently, the FDI itself has gradually faded out. A search of Leping Foundation's annual reports from 2014 to 2021 and its online news showed that it inherited all businesses of the FDI and its mode of policy influence. During this period, it had no other policy-related actions except for a study of the standard for eco-agriculture, surveys of the growth of early education

teachers in rural areas, and the creation of the first rating standard for charity organizations' credit. However, none of these projects was directly related to migrant workers.⁶⁸

4.3.2 Silent Pluralism

Like the two fields discussed previously, silent pluralism also appears in the field of migrant workers. Little Bird serves as a typical example. Founded by Wei Wei, a migrant-turned activist, in 1999⁶⁹, the hotline focuses on counseling and mediation of labor disputes (Becker 2010, 279; Tai 2015, 36; Fu 2018, 39; Jakimów 2021, 75). It also conducts training for migrant workers. By the end of 2015, it had established four offices in Beijing, Shenzhen, Shenyang, and Chongqing, all sharing a board and having the same work focus. As Wei Wei explicitly indicated, influencing public policies had never been an organizational objective or a mission for Little Bird; Little Bird had no contact with government sectors at the national level and lacked channels to influence policies.⁷⁰ Although Little Bird maintains good relationships with several local government sectors, such as the Beijing Bureau of Justice and its branch in Dongcheng district, and the Capital Civic Enhancement Committee Office, it never used these connections to influence policies. In addition, Little Bird neither submitted policy proposals to the NPC or the CPPCC nor responded to governments' solicitation of public opinions on relevant policies. As Liu Ming, executive director of Little Bird, admitted, governments never invited Little Bird to attend their policy meetings; Little Bird sometimes invited familiar officials to visit its offices but never discussed policy issues with them.⁷¹ Little Bird intentionally collects and compiles information obtained from its daily hotline service. However, it does not research this information, not to mention influencing policies based on the information, which contrasts those active actions taken by other bottom-up

⁶⁸ See the Leping Social Entrepreneur Foundation's website at <http://www.lepingfoundation.org>, accessed March 24, 2023.

⁶⁹ Although Little Bird has the most extended history in bottom-up labor organizations studied in this research, it did not operate consistently until 2004.

⁷⁰ The author's interview with Wei Wei on March 31, 2012, in Beijing.

⁷¹ The author's interview with Liu Ming on March 31, 2012, in Beijing.

organizations studied above. In 2013, Little Bird conducted large-scale surveys of migrant workers in the construction industry, but it did not submit the results to any authorities or seek policy innovations. Furthermore, such surveys were generally absent in its activities in the following years.⁷²

The Hotline for Unhappiness, created by Chen Jun, a migrant worker from Hebei Province, in 2005, is another example of silent pluralism. Since its founding, the organization focused on psychological counseling for migrant workers across the country, and it also established an activity center for local migrant children in 2009. As Chen admitted, the Hotline for Unhappiness did not have the capacity to take policy-related actions.⁷³ Although he is sympathetic to migrant workers and wishes to speak for them, his organization generally focuses on providing the abovementioned services without engaging in policy activities (Hsu 2009, 134). He wrote some informal proposals a few years ago but could not find any NPC representatives or CPPCC members to submit them. The organization lacks access to official institutions, including the ACFTU. The only official institution with which the hotline maintains a long-term relationship is the Beijing Volunteer Federation. However, this relationship is nominal and does not substantially help the organization. A psychologist once brought Chen to a meeting held by the MOHRSS, where he presented the necessity of meeting migrant workers' psychological needs. However, his speech did not generate much influence at the meeting, nor did Chen follow up. Like Little Bird, the Hotline for Unhappiness collects and conducts preliminary analysis of the information obtained from the hotline service. Nevertheless, it never influenced policies based on the information. Although Chen

⁷² See its annual reports from 2013 to 2015, available at <https://swap.stanford.edu/20161221150739/http://www.xiaoxiaoniao.org.cn/Item/list.asp?id=38&Page=1&py=0>, accessed July 12, 2019. Its annual reports from 2016 to 2019 are available at <http://www.xiaoxiaoniao.org.cn/html/job/work>, accessed October 6, 2020.

⁷³ The author's phone interview with Chen Jun on June 16, 2012. Most of the information about this organization was collected through this interview.

Jun and his family were in the spotlight thanks to the release of the documentary film *My Land*, the policy influence of his organization has not increased accordingly.

Founded by Liu Xiaohong, a professional social worker with a bachelor's degree in social work, in May 2010, Brick and Tile is a relatively new organization in the field. Since its founding, it has concentrated on providing various services to migrant workers in the construction industry, including participatory training, occupational safety education, cultural activities, and reciprocal stores. Although the organization cooperated with the media to produce and disseminate reports/programs calling for more public attention to construction workers, it has yet to try to influence specific policies relevant to the group. In its fieldwork, Brick and Tile listened to and collected migrant workers' opinions and demands. It even conducted a formal survey of signing employment contracts for Beijing's construction workers in 2012. However, the organization did not initiate any policy activities based on this information. It lacks access to government agencies. Consequently, they seldom invite each other. Generally speaking, this organization does not engage in policy activities, although it apparently shows sympathy to migrant workers.

Xu Yongguang, the creator of the famous Hope Project, jointly initiated the Narada Foundation in 2007. In the same year, the foundation launched the New Citizen Program project. Ten years later, the project was independently registered with the Beijing Bureau of Civil Affairs under the official name of Beijing Sanzhi Salvation Service Center for Children in Difficulty. Since its founding, the New Citizen Program has focused on supporting migrant children. In the first six years, it mainly funded schools for migrant children. However, the MOE's policy of closing such schools stymied this effort. In 2012, its Chaoyang No. 1 New Citizen School, located in the same town as Tongxin Experimental School, was also forced to shut down. Unlike Migrant Workers' Home, which turned to Cui Yongyuan and the media, the New Citizen Program maintained a low

profile. Although it once threatened to sue the authorities, it took no action. Xu Yongguang only offered vocal help despite his CPPCC membership and capacity as State Council advisor. Eventually, Tongxin Experimental School was restored, while Chaoyang No. 1 New Citizen School was closed. In 2013, the New Citizen Program stopped funding all schools. In the following few years, it funded teachers, curricula, and other organizations engaging in migrant children's education. Unfortunately, the outcomes of those projects were far from satisfactory.⁷⁴

After official registration in 2017, the New Citizen Program launched a new Weilan Library project to set up libraries in schools and communities for migrant children. This project has been more successful. By 2021, it had opened 53 libraries in nine cities.⁷⁵ More importantly, the New Citizen Program has started to study relevant policy issues and conduct research projects. It promulgated the China Migrant Children Education Development Report in 2017, cooperating with the 21st Century Education Research Institute, a think tank studying educational policies. In 2018, it conducted surveys in all schools for migrant children in Beijing and jointly produced another report on their education with other institutions. Although the New Citizen Program released these reports containing policy proposals to the media and the public, it did not translate them into policy actions until 2019. This year, it assisted an NPC representative in drafting and submitting a proposal for the first time. In June, it assisted Yang Dongping, the president of the 21st Century Education Research Institute and an advisor of the MOE, in making a presentation at a forum held by multiple official institutions, advocating for allowing all children to live with their migrant parents in cities and to enter public schools.⁷⁶ In 2021 and 2022, the New Citizen Program issued three research reports regarding migrant children's education. However, it did not send these

⁷⁴ See an online introduction of the New Citizen Program at <https://www.jiemodui.com/N/82948.html>, accessed October 19, 2020.

⁷⁵ Its annual work reports are available at http://www.sanzhi.org.cn/?page_id=806, accessed March 24, 2023.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

reports to government agencies to influence relevant policies. These recent policy-related actions had indications of embedded pluralism. However, lacking access to the official system is still a problem for the organization. Whether the New Citizen Program will fully break its silence and become an active policy advocate needs further observation.

4.3.3 Internet Websites

This chapter studies six internet websites in the field of migrant workers, applying the filtering criteria developed before. Similar to their counterparts in women's organizations and health organizations, most of these websites display the mode of silent pluralism: www.nongmingong.org provided training and employment information, as well as news relevant to migrant workers; www.qzzg.com.cn was mainly a website for fellowship activities; created by some labor lawyers, www.nmgfzwqw.com focused on specific cases of rights protection for migrant workers, and spread relevant knowledge and experience. These websites⁷⁷ had neither been involved in policy activities nor commented on any policy issues, despite the last one having some information on existing labor laws and regulations. Compared to these websites, www.chengbiancun.com⁷⁸ was more comprehensive. Furthermore, it had some offline activities and contacts with other social organizations for migrant workers. However, it neither engaged in online or offline policy activities nor collected opinions of migrant workers and sent them to the government. According to Wu Ang, one of the webmasters of this website, they must implement self-censorship when editing its content. As a grassroots website, it had no access to government officials and never made plans to influence policies.⁷⁹

Focusing on female migrant workers, www.jianjiaobuluo.com was a relatively new website

⁷⁷ A search on March 25, 2023, showed that the former two websites closed while the third website was on sale.

⁷⁸ A search on July 15, 2019, showed that this website had closed.

⁷⁹ The author's interview with Wu Ang on June 19, 2012, in Beijing.

created in August 2014. As its name indicated⁸⁰, the website aimed to deliver and amplify the voices of female migrant workers. Unlike the websites mentioned above, in addition to services and fellowship-oriented information, this website had several columns that included discussions of such policy issues as sexual harassment, domestic violence, family planning policies, employment, and social insurance for female migrant workers. During the 2015 annual NPC and CPPCC sessions, it established a particular column concentrating on various policy issues related to migrant workers. It even presented a policy initiative calling for the reform of the maternity protection system. Some social organizations also used this platform to disseminate their policy proposals. Similar to www.hbvhbv.com in the health field, www.jianjiaobuluo.com served as a platform for mobilizing constituencies to influence policies to some extent. However, considering its infrequent policy activities and that policy-related information only accounted for a relatively small part of its content, the website was not an active policy advocate. In addition, it increasingly implemented stricter self-censorship. It never created a policy column during the annual NPC and the CPPCC sessions after 2015, and policy proposals of other social organizations almost disappeared. In 2015 and 2016, it published a limited number of posts covering strikes, but such news was generally absent from 2017. Overall, this website attempted to break silent pluralism but was unable to achieve the goal. Zheng Churan joined the website's management team after the Feminist Five event. To protect the website, she maintained a low profile and practiced self-censorship. Nevertheless, the website was still subject to crackdown. In April 2020, the police searched its office and temporarily detained one staff member, albeit the website survived the raid.⁸¹ Unfortunately, it was eventually forced to close in August 2021.

A more exceptional website was www.ilabour.org, another relatively new one created in

⁸⁰ In Chinese, one of the homophones of chili, which is pronounced “jianjiao,” is scream.

⁸¹ See Zheng Churan's online article at <https://matters.news/@solidkillian>, accessed April 28, 2020.

November 2013. This website was a part of the “project of caring for migrant workers of the new generation” started by some scholars at Peking University, Tsinghua University, Sun Yat-sen University, and The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. In fact, the website’s content covered all migrant workers instead of merely the “new generation,” and it discussed many policy issues related to migrant workers. Like www.hbvhbv.com and www.jianjiaobuluo.com, www.ilabour.org served as a platform for mobilizing constituencies to influence policies: other social organizations disseminated their policy proposals here; advisors of the website, mainly scholars in the four universities, also published their research and policy proposals to solicit public opinions and support; the website intentionally copied policy-related posts from other resources.

Most importantly, this website stood out as an active policy advocate. Supported by relatively stable financial and human resources, the website conducted a few field surveys and generated multiple research reports based on the surveys. For example, it conducted a survey of the social security of migrant workers in multiple Chinese cities in July-August 2014; at the end of the year, it published another survey report regarding wage arrears in the construction industry; following the Foxconn event, it conducted five surveys in four Foxconn factories and disclosed their mistreatment of migrant workers. Furthermore, the website surprisingly took a critical attitude toward the state and included some highly politicized posts. In its last survey report of Foxconn in April 2015, for instance, it uncovered and condemned rigged elections of trade unions in these factories (Chan et al. 2020, 121-122). As mentioned before, the ACFTU played a role in these elections. For another instance, several columns on the website published detailed reports of strikes in multiple places, which were rarely seen in the media within China. In March 2015, the website republished several articles supporting the Feminist Five. In fact, Wei Zhili, one editor of www.ilabour.org, is Zheng Churan’s husband. This relationship made the website more politically

sensitive after the Feminist Five event. In 2018, Yang Zhengjun, chief editor of the website, supported Shenzhen Jasic (Jiashi) Technology workers' protests. The same year, website editors assisted a group of Hunan migrant workers with pneumoconiosis in claiming compensation in Shenzhen. These actions incurred political repression (Elfstrom 2021, 104, 141). In January 2019, the police detained Yang Zhengjun. Two months later, Wei Zhili and Ke Chengbing, another website editor, were also detained. Then, the website was forced to shut down.⁸²

In its short history, www.ilabour.org organized or participated in many offline activities and developed features of a formal organization. It was not only an active policy advocate but embraced critical pluralism, making it extraordinary in internet websites studied in this research. Unfortunately, like many formal organizations adopting the same mode in the fields of women and health, the state terminated this exclusive case of critical pluralism in the field of migrant workers.

4.4 Discussion: A Conversation with Existing Labor Scholarship

Before concluding this chapter, a conversation with existing labor scholarship is helpful to understand the value of this research. Kuruvilla (2018) points out that the foci of labor scholarship have gone through five periods with the evolution of Chinese industrial relations. After 2000, the central topic has been whether the Chinese labor movement is/was evolving. Between 2006 and 2015, a greater degree of optimism emerged in the wake of increased labor contention and collective actions. Vibrant debates developed regarding whether a genuine labor movement could form or was forming, and specifically, the role of NGOs in that effort. Unfortunately, the post-2015 period has witnessed a variety of state crackdowns on labor activism, making the formation of a nascent movement impossible. The chilling effect extended to Chinese labor scholarship.

⁸² See an online news report of Radio Free Asia at <https://www.rfa.org/mandarin/yataibaodao/renquanfazhi/hj-04222019120304.html> and another online news report at <http://redchinacn.net/portal.php?mod=view&aid=38115>, accessed April 25, 2019.

Cautious optimism was replaced by pessimism. Kuruvilla (2018, 1022) notes the relative void in fieldwork-based scholarly research on labor after 2016.

Driven by this “movement fetish,” it is unsurprising that research on the policy influence of labor organizations is scarce in Chinese labor scholarship. Although some research sporadically and haphazardly touched on this theme, there have been no systematic studies from a comparative perspective. Given the abundant policy-related activities and fruitful policy outcomes Chinese labor organizations have achieved, the negligence of the theme led to excessive pessimism that stymies the future development of scholarship in the labor field. As Tai (2015, 2) argues, the absence of dramatic political changes does not mean that these organizations have failed to meet organizational objectives and, in the process, impact state policies and practices while contributing to societal well-being. After several rounds of crackdowns, some labor organizations not only survived but are still thriving. The future of Chinese civil society is not necessarily bleak (Tai 2015, 130). Although this research has limitations, which will be discussed in the last chapter, it is a meaningful attempt to fill the gap in Chinese labor scholarship and explore a new research agenda.

The negligence of the policy influence of labor organizations may also lead to biased conclusions. For example, Lee and Shen (2011,181) hold that most labor NGOs fall short of protecting workers’ legal rights, enhancing workers’ rights consciousness, and building labor solidarity. Consequently, they call these organizations the anti-solidarity machine that merely reproduces state domination or market-driven inequality. However, the research only covers the service provision of these organizations, including legal aid and legal education, while completely ignoring their efforts in influencing public policies. However, striving for labor policy creation/change, monitoring policy implementation, and educating workers to use legal weapons form a consistent way toward rights protection, conscious promotion, and solidarity building.

Overlooking the policy influence of China's labor organizations, they draw overly pessimistic conclusions and fail to provide a comprehensive insight into China's potential labor movement.

Another example is Hsu J.'s (2017) research on the relationships between migrant NGOs and the Chinese government. In this book, Hsu constructs a spatial framework that delineates three types of government-NGO relationships and assigns them to different administrative layers. The first type is symbolic cooperation, which serves little practical purpose for the state other than as a symbolic gesture promoting state legitimacy and validity. In symbolic cooperation, there is a relatively low level of engagement between the two stakeholders, including programs or policy dialogues. Symbolic cooperation is primarily exercised by the central and, to a lesser extent, municipal authorities. The second type of relationship, asymmetric relationship, primarily benefits the state and creates a dependent NGO sector. It usually occurs between the district-level authorities and NGOs in delivering social services. In this cooperation, the power imbalance makes NGOs sacrifice some organizational autonomy in exchange for the commencement and continuation of their projects. The third type of relationship is strategic collaboration, which serves the interests of both the state and NGOs. A higher level of mutual understanding and trust exists in this cooperation. A central tenet of the strategic partnership is the improvement of the state's policies or policy implementation utilizing NGOs' expertise, so the relationship is defined as a process through which the actors share control over the partnership (Hsu J. 2017, 41-42). Strategic cooperation characterizes the relationship between NGOs and the street neighborhood or residents' committees.

While this creative framework is inspiring, without considering the dimension of policy influence, the rigid application of these three types of cooperation and some supporting case studies in the book may be open to question. First, it classifies any NGOs' relationships with the

central state into symbolic cooperation. Surprisingly, the three core case studies are Zhicheng, Facilitator, and Migrant Women's Club under the BCDC (Hsu J. 2017, 65-74, 90-91). According to relevant case studies in this research⁸³, all these three organizations have/had good records of influencing state's policies or policy implementation utilizing their expertise. They have established mutual understanding and trust with the central and Beijing municipal governments. Although the BCDC's policy influence has degraded in recent years, the policy influence of Zhicheng and Facilitator is probably still rising. Following Hsu's delineation of the three types of cooperation, the relationships between these three organizations, especially Zhicheng and Facilitator, and the central government and the Beijing municipal government are by any means strategic collaboration instead of symbolic cooperation. If Yilian and Love Save Pneumoconiosis were introduced into the analysis, their relationships with the central state would also be strategic collaboration. Assuming their cooperation with the state was symbolic, the government would not be motivated to invite them so frequently in the policy process and adopt many of their policy proposals. Hsu's misclassification stems from her focus on service delivery and negligence of the policy influence of these organizations.

Second, the book classifies any organizational relationships with district-level governments in service delivery projects as asymmetric cooperation. In fact, this argument is based on resource dependence theory. It proposes that organizations are highly dependent on external resources, especially government funding, and this dependency will erode organizational autonomy. However, this resource dependence argument may not be valid when policy influence is considered. According to the quantitative analysis in Chapter Nine of this research, government funding has no significant effect on social organizations' willingness, actions, and effectiveness to influence

⁸³ Chapter Two of this research studies Migrant Women's Club under the BCDC.

policies. In addition, strategic cooperation could also develop from service delivery projects with district governments if policy influence is considered. For example, Hsu (2017 J., 96-99) uses Beijing Shining Stone Community Action's unsuccessful cooperation with Haidian and Daxing districts by 2006 to explain the asymmetric relationship. However, according to the author's interview with Song Qinghua, director of the organization, in August 2012, Shining Stone Community Action successfully conducted more than ten projects by cooperating with Daxing, Dongcheng, and Chaoyang districts. More importantly, in 2010, Dongcheng District incorporated Open Space Technology, a method the organization had employed in many cooperative projects, into the district's twelfth five-year plan for promotion. In the process, Song did not feel any sacrifice of organizational autonomy.⁸⁴ Another example is that the Shijingshan District Education Committee and Beijing Municipal Education Committee recognized Tongxin Xiwang Homeland's project regarding informal preschool education for migrant children and extended it to ten experimental sites in 2012.⁸⁵ Hsu J. (2017, 131-135) uses Tongxin Xiwang Homeland to illustrate strategic cooperation between NGOs and the street neighborhood or residents' committees but does not mention the development of this project. Nonetheless, the case shows that strategic cooperation can also be established between the same organization and district or municipal governments when policy influence is considered.

Lastly, the cooperation between NGOs and the street neighborhood or residents' committees may not necessarily be strategic. As state policy implementation arms at the lowest administrative levels, these committees can exercise imbalanced power over NGOs at any time, which indicates that asymmetric relationships can always outweigh strategic cooperation. In the case of Migrant

⁸⁴ The author's interview with Song Qinghua on August 14, 2012, in Beijing. This chapter does not include Beijing Shining Stone Community Action in the analysis because the author decided later that the organization focused on community development instead of migrant workers. Therefore, it is not a labor organization.

⁸⁵ The author's phone interview with Ma Xiaoduo, founder of Tongxin Xiwang Homeland, on June 15, 2012. This chapter does not include this organization in the analysis because its activities are mainly in Shijingshan District.

Workers' Home, for instance, the Jinzhan Township government attempted to close Tongxin Experimental School in 2012 and to force the organization to move in 2017, despite a relatively harmonious relationship between the two stakeholders.

In a nutshell, the negligence of the policy influence of labor organizations in existing Chinese labor scholarship has led to not only some biased analyses but also confusion in setting up research agendas in the wake of recent political changes in China. In addition to dramatic resistance and collective actions, influencing labor policies should be an integral part of the labor movement. Now is the time to fill in this gap.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter studies social organizations for migrant workers, applying the analytical framework developed in the last two chapters. As the single top-down social organization in this field, the ACFTU has gone through an evolving route to represent the interests of migrant workers and influence relevant policies. It stood aloof from migrant workers for more than two decades after the formation of this new and unique underprivileged group in the reform era. Since Hu Jintao took power, it gradually incorporated migrant workers into its constituencies and represented their interests. In the first three years, it became the major entity implementing existing policies while seldom participating in other policy stages. Since 2006, when it was explicitly granted the power, the ACFTU has increasingly become an active policy advocate and participated in all policy stages. Although confined by certain limitations, the ACFTU has tried to protect the interests of migrant workers and has influenced relevant policies effectively. The case of the ACFTU again verifies the findings in the last two chapters: mass organizations do not necessarily fall into the category of active state corporatism, and policy influence modes of state corporatist organizations stem from the exterior source—state authorization and empowerment.

This chapter discloses that embedded pluralism is the most significant policy influence mode in bottom-up social organizations for migrant workers. Case analyses show that many formal organizations fall into this category. It is consistent with Leung's (2017, 209) observation that to win the state's tolerance, China's Labor NGOs need to avoid confrontational approaches and actively advocate constructive, submissive, and peaceful strategies in their activities to advance worker rights. Hsu (2012) also finds that labor NGOs' engagement, collaboration, and partnerships with the local state enable most of them to conduct their work. The cases of Yilian, Zhicheng, Facilitator, and Love Save Pneumoconiosis indicate that cooperative professionals, such as lawyers, social workers, and journalists, may have better opportunities to establish relatively harmonious and stable relationships with the government and influence policies more effectively. On Action and Migrant Workers' Home, established by nonprofessional migrants-turned activists, are relatively alienated from the state and occasionally suffer from harassment, although they also embrace embedded pluralism. However, this is not an undisputed rule. Li Dajun was also an outstanding social worker, and Walking in the World maintained a good relationship with the official system before the organization and its founder were surprisingly repressed.

The case of the FDI exhibits reduced embedded pluralism, a newfound subcategory of embedded pluralism. It focuses on providing services instead of paying attention to policy issues systematically. It actively influenced policies only when meeting policy-related difficulties in its daily work. When it was invited to attend policy meetings, it did not play an important role and usually would not follow up. The next chapter will further define and discuss this subcategory.

A few organizations display silent pluralism. Consistent with the finding in health organizations, whether an organization is group-based is not a factor affecting its mode/level of policy influence because both categories of embedded pluralism and silent pluralism include social

organizations created/led by migrants-turned activists and sympathetic elites. As the last two chapters discover, informal organizations, mainly internet websites, usually fall into the category of silent pluralism. Although it largely holds in the field of migrant workers, two websites in this field tried to break the mode. One of them, www.jianjiaobuluo.com, turned out to be an unsuccessful case after it implemented strict self-censorship. Despite this caution, it suffered from a police raid in 2020 and was forced to shut down in 2021. It served as a platform for mobilizing constituents to influence policies to some extent, albeit the website itself was not an active policy advocate. Inadequate organizational capacity, including lack of access to policymakers, is a common reason for these organizations' low level of policy influence, despite the fact that some of them show sympathy to migrant workers and are/were willing to influence relevant policies.

The other website, www.ilabour.org, adopted critical pluralism to represent the interests of migrant workers and influence policies actively. This website is an extraordinary case in this research. Unfortunately, like many organizations embracing the same mode in the fields of women and health, the state eventually closed it. Similar to the other two fields previously studied, organizations adopting embedded pluralism or silent pluralism in the field of migrant workers have better opportunities to survive. Only one organization—Walking in the World—in the category of embedded pluralism, and one website—www.jianjiaobuluo.com—in the category of silent pluralism suffered from state repressions. These repressions could be due to their connections with politically sensitive figures or events. Although embracing embedded pluralism or silent pluralism cannot guarantee an organization's security, adopting critical pluralism has been significantly riskier. This comparison sustains the discovery in the last two chapters that the state is more inclined to repress organizations adopting critical pluralism. Likewise, the result is that critical pluralism has been eliminated from the field of migrant workers. In this field, Yilian is the only

formal organization showing signs of critical pluralism in a certain period. However, it did not display some key characteristics of critical pluralism and stopped taking aggressive actions to influence policies after 2015; therefore, it cannot be categorized into this mode of policy influence. As Zhang and Smith (2009, 81) point out, the government allows labor NGOs to exist because it can use them as a way to allow some letting off of steam and thus contain labor discontent. The findings of this chapter show that criticisms of the government and mass mobilization are intolerable in this field. Once labor NGOs crossed or were inclined to cross the red line, state crackdowns ensued.

This chapter verifies that the analytical framework developed from studying women's and health organizations is valid to analyze the policy influence of social organizations for migrant workers. The following two chapters will further test the framework by investigating social organizations for three conventional underprivileged groups—disabled persons, minors, and seniors.

Chapter 5 SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR DISABLED PERSONS

This chapter and the next chapter will discuss social organizations for disabled persons, minors, and seniors, three conventional underprivileged groups. These chapters will further test the previously developed analytical framework. Compared with bottom-up social organizations in other fields studied in this research, bottom-up organizations in these three fields were relatively underdeveloped regarding policy influence. Research in these fields is also relatively scarce. As Fulda et al. (2015, 151-152) note, notably missing from academic discourses about civil society are discussions about the contribution of Chinese disability groups as social innovators. This research is an attempt to address the gap in the literature. As far as organizational quantities are concerned, fewer bottom-up organizations at the national level—as defined in the introductory chapter—are identified in the fields of minors and seniors. Top-down organizations in the fields of disabled persons and minors are no less active and effective than those in other fields. However, in the field of seniors, these organizations play a minimal role in influencing policies. In general, senior people are the most underrepresented group in this research. This chapter studies social organizations for disabled persons; the next chapter will cover those for minors and seniors. A summary is offered after discussing each type of organization, and a more comprehensive conclusion will be drawn at the end of the next chapter.

5.1 The Development of Social Organizations for Disabled Persons in China

According to the second national sample survey of disabled persons conducted in 2006, the number of disabled persons in China was 82.96 million. In recent years, the figure was updated to 85 million.¹ They are classified into six categories: the visually impaired (14.86%),

¹ For the total number and the proportion of each category, see Report on Development of Disabled Persons' Cause in China (2017), edited by Zheng Gongcheng and Yang Lixiong. Also see Hallett (2015, 182) and Fulda et al. (2015, 152).

hearing/speech disabilities (25.69%), physical disability (29.07%), intellectual disability (6.68%), psychiatric disability (7.4%), and multiple disabilities (16.3%). The number of people affected by disability in China (namely disabled people and their family members) is around 260 million, or nearly 20 percent of the population (Hallett 2015, 183). However, this sizeable disadvantaged group was underrepresented for a long time in the history of the PRC. After its founding, the Chinese government organized the Chinese Association for the Welfare of the Blind in 1953 and the Chinese Association for the Welfare of the Deaf in 1956. In 1960, these two associations merged into a new organization called the China Association for the Blind and Deaf. These associations facilitated the government's provision of services to certain disabled persons, while they seldom participated in policymaking. Since 1968, the China Association for the Blind and Deaf had ceased working until its restoration in 1978. However, this association still played a minimal role in policymaking, and its service provision was also far from satisfactory compared with the enormous demands of disabled persons in China. Under this circumstance, a key figure stood out to change the landscape of the field. Deng Pufang—the maimed oldest son of former Chinese paramount leader Deng Xiaoping—and colleagues lobbied the government and mobilized multiple social forces to establish the China Foundation for Disabled Persons (CFDP) in 1984. Acquiring support from high-level political leaders and frequently communicating with foreign governments and other organizations, the CFDP obtained more resources to invest in disability-related affairs (*canjiren shiye*). In 1987, it organized the first national sample survey of disabled persons, a pioneering undertaking in the country's history. These achievements encouraged Deng Pufang to pursue a more ambitious goal—creating a new overarching mass organization for disabled persons in China. His political resources and significant achievements when leading the CFDP made it come true shortly. In 1988, the China Disabled Persons' Federation (CDPF) was

founded by integrating the CFDP and the China Association for the Blind and Deaf.² Since its founding, the state has granted the CDPF the status of a mass organization, and it has established branches at all administrative levels. Like the ACFTU, the CDPF incorporates all social organizations with official backgrounds in this field; that is to say, there are no top-down organizations for disabled persons working outside the CDPF system.

In contrast to the rapidly burgeoning CDPF, the establishment of bottom-up social organizations in the field of disability covered an extended period. The oldest organization (it is also the oldest bottom-up organization studied in this research), the Beijing Disabled Youths Club (Hallett 2015, 177), was created by Sun Xun and her friends in 1982, which has been renamed Huitianyu since 2003³. In 1988, Xu Bailun and his wife, Ji Yuqin, started the Golden Key Research Center of Education for the Visually Impaired (Golden Key hereafter)⁴ to popularize the Golden Key Project that advocates and facilitates visually impaired children's enrollment in regular schools (Hsu 2017, 43). Meng Weina established Huiling Services for People with Learning Disabilities in Guangzhou in 1990 (Hallett 2015, 181).⁵ This organization has extended to 39 cities in mainland China and Hong Kong by 2022, including the Beijing Huiling Community Services for People with Mental Disabilities (Beijing Huiling hereafter) started in 2000 as the coordinating institution for all Huiling organizations across the country until 2014.⁶ In 2013, Meng Weina

² For the founding of the CDPF, see Kohrman's *Bodies of Difference* (2005).

³ In 2003, the Beijing Disabled Youths Club registered with the Xicheng District Bureau for Industry and Commerce and was renamed Beijing Huitianyu Information Consultation Center. In 2012, it registered with the Xicheng District Bureau of Civil Affairs and was renamed Beijing Xicheng Huitianyu Disabled Persons' Service Center for Community Culture and Sports, using the Xicheng branch of the CDPF as the sponsoring unit.

⁴ This organization used the name Golden Key Research Center of Education for Blind Children in 1988 and changed it to its current name the following year. After negotiations with the CDPF, the CDPF took over this organization in 2010. In 2013, it registered with the MOCA using the CDPF as the official sponsoring unit. In practice, the China Braille Publishing House, an affiliated institution of the CDPF, manages Golden Key.

⁵ The precursor of this organization was Zhiling School, which was established by Meng Weina in 1985. (Fisher et al. 2012, 166).

⁶ Each Huiling organization is an independent organization with its own local registration. Before 2006, Meng Weina played a crucial role in directing the operation of all Huiling organizations. From 2006, they held the China Huiling Summit every year and established the China Huiling Service Center within Beijing Huiling. By doing so, collective decision-making has taken the place of individual decision-making to some extent. However, Meng Weina is still the prominent leader in this new system. All Huiling organizations share common principles and working methods in providing services to people with learning disabilities.

registered Guangdong Huiling Foundation Facilitating Persons with Mental Disabilities (Guangdong Huiling Foundation hereafter) with Guangdong provincial branch of the MOCA in Guangzhou. Since 2014, the headquarters of Huiling organizations has moved to Guangdong Huiling Foundation. Founded in 1993 by Tian Huiping, Beijing Stars and Rain Education Institute for Autism (Stars and Rain hereafter) was the first and the most influential educational organization dedicated to serving autistic children and their family members. Around the turn of the century, several organizations were created to serve people with intellectual or visual disabilities. These include Wang Lijuan's Beijing Zhiguang School of Special Education and Training (Zhiguang), Xiao Peilin's Beijing Fengtai Lizhi Rehabilitation Center (Fengtai Lizhi), and Zheng Xiaojie's Beijing Hongdandan Cultural Service Center for the Visually Impaired (Hongdandan)⁷. In the next few years, more social organizations were established by the younger generation, such as the One Plus One Disabled Persons' Cultural Development Center (OPO), the God-Gifted Garden Art Therapy Center for People with Learning & Mental Disabilities (God-Gifted Garden hereafter), the China-Dolls Center for Rare Disorders (China-Dolls hereafter)⁸, and the Enable Disability Studies Institute (EDSI). In recent years, organizations established by parents of people with intellectual disability have become active (McCabe and Deng, 2018; Song and Deng, 2020). Rong Ai Rong Le, created by Wang Xiaogeng in 2011, is a representative organization in Beijing. In July 2014, 17 such organizations in different locations initiated a joint organization called Inclusion China, and Wang Xiaogeng was elected the first president⁹. In 2018, Inclusion China registered with the MOCA Beijing Branch under the official name of the Geng Foundation to

⁷ Hongdandan registered with the Beijing Bureau of Civil Affairs in 2013 and has been renamed Beijing Hongdandan Cultural Service Center for the Visually Impaired since then. Before 2013, it registered as a commercial institution named Beijing Hongdandan Education & Culture Exchange Center.

⁸ It registered with the Beijing Bureau of Civil Affairs in 2011 and has used the current name since then. Before 2011, it registered as a commercial institution named China-Dolls Care and Support Association.

⁹ Wang Xiaogeng passed away in September 2017. Li Hong has since served as executive director of Rong Ai Rong Le and board president of the Geng Foundation.

commemorate Wang Xiaogeng, who passed away in 2017. By the end of 2020, it has incorporated 287 organizational members across China.¹⁰ Among these organizations introduced above, Huitianyu, Golden Key, the OPO, and China-Dolls were founded/led by disabled persons—hence, they can be called disabled people’s organizations—while most of the others were created/led by sympathetic elites or family members of disabled persons.

It is worth mentioning that as the Chinese government relaxed the registration requirements for bottom-up organizations that are less politically sensitive and pursue various social services in recent years, many such organizations, including a large number of organizations in the field of disability, have registered with the MOCA agencies to obtain legal status. In the meantime, public service outsourcing or government procurement of services from social organizations significantly increased (Li 2013, 72-74). The funding sources of these organizations are increasingly diversified. Some have turned to the social enterprise model and relied more on earned revenues (Fulda et al., 2015; Li, 2017).

5.2 Top-down Organizations for Disabled Persons: the CDPF and Its Affiliated Organizations

5.2.1 Policy Influence of the CDPF

Like the ACWF and the ACFTU, the CDPF has been granted the functions of representing the common interests of disabled persons, protecting their legitimate rights, uniting, educating, and serving disabled persons, and managing and developing disability-related affairs commissioned by the Chinese government. These responsibilities have been listed in the CDPF’s constitution since its founding and further confirmed in the Law on the Protection of Disabled Persons (the Disabled Persons’ Law hereafter), adopted in 1990 and revised in 2008. In the revised version of the Disabled Persons’ Law, Article 6 states that the opinions of disabled persons and

¹⁰ See its self-introduction at <https://www.gengfoundation.com/jjhjs>, accessed April 14, 2023.

their organizations shall be taken into account on issues involving the rights and interests of disabled persons in formulating laws, regulations, rules, and other public policies. It also states that disabled persons and their organizations shall have the right to express their opinions and offer suggestions to state organs at all administrative levels for the protection of the rights and interests of disabled persons and the development of disability-related affairs. Because the CDPF is the peak organization for disabled persons, this law guarantees its participation in the policy process. Although the 1990 version of the law did not include such an article, the CDPF's participation was guaranteed in practice.

The CDPF possesses substantive means to perform policy functions. First, the CDPF usually has NPC and CPPCC seats, including their local branches. For example, Deng Pufang was a vice chairman of the National Committee of the CPPCC; his successor, Zhang Haidi¹¹, was a standing committee member of the CPPCC. In addition to representatives and members from the CDPF system, some disabled persons or their family members and friends outside of the CDPF system may also be elected as representatives of the People's Congress or selected as members of the CPPCC. Each year, before the NPC and the CPPCC sessions, the CDPF holds conferences to study essential policy issues and coordinate these representatives and members to submit proposals. After the sessions, the CDPF usually summarizes its participation in these sessions and manages proposals transferred by the NPC or the CPPCC. Since 2014, the CDPF has won opportunities to attend the CPPCC's biweekly deliberative symposiums to discuss its policy concerns. For instance, Zhang Haidi proposed enacting the Regulation on the Welfare of Disabled Persons at a biweekly symposium held in January 2015.

Second, as early as 1993, the CDPF successfully lobbied the government to establish an

¹¹ In September 2023, Zhang Haidi stepped down from the chairwoman of the CDPF.

institution under the State Council called the Coordination Working Committee on Disability, headed by a vice premier-level official and composed of 34 governmental ministries and social organizations. The committee also established local offices across the country. As a trans-ministry institution with its secretariat located in the CDPF, it has served as an essential venue for the CDPF to communicate with the central government and to engage and lobby other authorities. The State Council renamed it Working Committee on Disability in 2006 and strengthened its functions. For example, the CDPF held a coordination meeting in 2009 under the committee's name to communicate with relevant member ministries for new policies permitting eligible disabled persons to operate automobiles. The CDPF eventually accomplished its goal after this meeting. Before that, it had made efforts for ten years.

Third, the CDPF has particular institutions and personnel to deal with policy issues and conduct policy-related activities: one of its vice presidents is assigned to take charge of policy activities; the Rights Protection Department is an ad hoc department established to conduct policy-related activities and protect the rights of people with disabilities; other departments, such as the Research Office, the Rehabilitation Department, the Education and Employment Department, and the Sports Department, may also handle policy issues in their jurisdictions and participate in relevant activities. In addition, the CDPF attaches importance to guiding and supervising local branches to communicate with local governments and create/revise policies benefiting disabled persons.

Last but most importantly, the unique personal identity of Deng Pufang strengthened the CDPF's status to acquire resources and influence policies.¹² For example, Chen and Xu (2011) document Deng's remarkable efforts over a long period to resist a national trend to ban physically

¹² In September 2023, Deng Pufang stepped down from the honorary chairman of the CDPF. Its consequences remain to be observed.

disabled persons' use of three-wheelers for passenger transport by many local governments.

The CDPF can go through all policy stages. It has played the chief agenda-setting role in the policy field of disabled persons and has made numerous initiatives to either create new policies or revise existing ones. It has drafted/facilitated/influenced almost all policies in this field and served as the major implementing entity and one of the central evaluating bodies. The Disabled Persons' Law is a typical example.

The CDPF and the Disabled Persons' Law

Deng Pufang intended to enact a particular law for disabled persons after he founded the CFDP in 1984. However, the CFDP's low administrative status prevented it from supporting such a comprehensive law. The creation of the CDPF in 1988 made his idea realizable. With the power of this new mass organization, he put the law on the NPC's legislative agenda and made the CDPF the principal drafter of the law (Tang and Regan 2010, 323). At the end of 1990, the NPC adopted the law, which became effective in May 1991. The CDPF also successfully lobbied the central government to incorporate the Disabled Persons' Law into the national Five-year Law Popularization Program and prodded local governments to enact implementation measures.

The CDPF participated in all inspections of implementing the law launched by the NPC or the CPPCC. Similar to the Women's Law, the drawbacks of the Disabled Persons' Law were exposed in the proceeding of market reforms, and the CDPF found these problems during the inspections. In 2003 and 2004, the CDPF proposed to revise the law and obtained the NPC's approval in 2004. Again, the NPC designated it as the major drafter of the revisions. The CDPF researched various issues and held numerous workshops and colloquia to listen to opinions from all sides, including governmental sectors, social organizations, specialists, and disabled persons.

It also incorporated some content from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).¹³ In the process, it accepted the social model of the disability¹⁴ underpinning the CRPD to some extent (Tang and Regan 2010, 324-325). Beijing's hosting of the 2008 Summer Olympics and Paralympics accelerated the adoption of the new law. The CDPF utilized the opportunity of hosting the Paralympics to mobilize resources and lobby for relevant policies. To improve its international image, the CCP was inclined to approve these policies and allocate more resources to the CDPF. For example, on March 28, 2008, the politburo of the CCP promulgated Opinions of the Central Committee of the CCP and the State Council on Promoting the Development of Disability-related Affairs, which was drafted by the CDPF and manifested the Party-state's supporting attitude toward disability-related affairs. The promulgation of this document made adopting other policies relevant to disabled persons easier. The NPC eventually adopted the revised Disabled Persons' Law on April 24, 2008, three months before the opening of the Olympic Games.

In the following years, the CDPF was devoted to prompting local governments to revise their implementation measures of the law through its local branches and inspecting the new law's implementation. In 2011, the NPC invited the CDPF to participate in its after-legislation evaluation of the Disabled Persons' Law.¹⁵ The CDPF acted actively in this process and combined this work with its efforts to change local policies relevant to disabled persons.

¹³ The UN General Assembly adopted the CRPD on December 13, 2006, and opened it for signatures on March 30, 2007. The CRPD came into force on May 3, 2008. China signed the CRPD on the first day of opening signature and ratified it on June 26, 2008. The Chinese government, the CDPF, and Deng Pufang contributed to the text and the adoption of the CRPD (Petersen 2010, 89-90).

¹⁴ The social model of disability supersedes the medical model in the CRPD. The social model recognizes that a disabled person's impairment arises not from her/his physiognomy but from the discriminatory environment/context in which s/he lives. It holds the environment, physical and attitudinal, responsible for the obstacles confronting people with disabilities, which excludes them from participating fully or at all in all areas of social life, and proposes disability mainstreaming and equal treatment and opportunity for people with disabilities on par with non-disabled people (Tang and Regan 2010, 322; Waddington 2006, 17). At the heart of the social model is the slogan "NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US," which expresses the attempt by disabled people to take back control over their lives (Hallett 2015, 173).

¹⁵ The NPC adopted this new procedure to improve the quality of legislation. Before the Disabled Persons' Law, the NPC evaluated only two other laws under the new system of after-legislation evaluation.

The CDPF has been an active and influential participant in making policies related to disabled persons since its founding. In its first year, the CDPF cooperated with six other ministries to enact the Five-year Working Outline of Disability-related Affairs (1988-1992). Since then, the CDPF has presided over the enactment of all “five-year plans” for disability-related affairs as parts of the national “five-year plans” and relevant action plans such as the National Disability Prevention Action Plans (2016-2020) (2021-2025), the Action Plan for Poverty Reduction of Impoverished Persons with Disabilities (2016-2020), the Plans for Promoting Special Education (2014-2016) (2017-2020), and the Three-year Action Plan for Promoting the Employment of Disabled Persons (2022-2024). The CDPF also initiated and drafted the Regulation on the Employment of the Disabled, the Regulation on the Construction of Barrier-Free Environments, and the Regulation on Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons. From 2020 to 2022, the CDPF successfully pushed for upgrading the Regulation on the Construction of Barrier-Free Environments to a law and served as the principal drafter.

Thanks to the CDPF’s push and participation, other authorities enacted/revised many policies pertaining to disabled persons, such as the Regulation on the Education of People with Disabilities, the Code for Design on Accessibility of Urban Roads and Buildings, and the Classification and Grading Criteria of Disability. The former Ministry of Railways promulgated the Code for Design on Accessibility of Railway Passenger Station Buildings in 2005, and the Civil Aviation Administration of China enacted the Measures on the Air Transportation of Disabled Persons in 2009 and revised it in 2015. From 2013 to 2018, the CDPF participated in the enactment/revision of nine national/industrial standards for the construction of a barrier-free environment and 12 barrier-free policies in multiple industries such as communications, civil

aviation, finance, and the postal service.¹⁶ In 2015, the State Council issued Opinions on Accelerating the Well-off Process of Disabled Persons, which serves as another comprehensive guidance for disability-related affairs. In the same year, the State Council promulgated Opinions on Establishing a Full-Scale System of Living Subsidies for Disabled Persons with Financial Difficulties and Nursing Subsidies for Severe Disabled Persons, which has established a national system to provide disabled persons basic welfare subsidies. In 2018, the State Council enacted Opinions on Establishing a System of Rehabilitation and Salvation for Disabled Children. The Civil Code, adopted in 2020, further confirms the special protection of disabled persons and the CDPF's responsibility for rights protection.

The CDPF also regularly watches national legislation and other policymaking activities that may be related to disabled persons and makes efforts to insert its proposals.¹⁷ For most of the time, it could affect policy results successfully. Like other mass organizations, the CDPF can create policies by itself. These policies are as effective as departmental rules. For example, the CDPF promulgated the Opinions on Strengthening Community Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons in 2008 and issued the Notice of Accomplishing Barrier-free Transformation for Registered Severe Disabled Persons' Families in 2019. It coordinates other government agencies to create policy documents benefiting disabled persons jointly. For example, in 2010, the CDPF and 15 other agencies issued Guidance on Accelerating the Construction of Social Security System and Service System for Disabled Persons; the CDPF and the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology promulgated two guiding documents to support information consumption of Disabled Persons in

¹⁶ According to an online report of Xinhua News Agency, available at http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2018-09/13/c_1123425731.htm, accessed Nov. 14, 2018.

¹⁷ These policies include the General Principles of the Civil Law, the General Rules of the Civil Law, the Criminal Law, the Law on Road Traffic Safety, the Social Assistance Law, the Social Insurance Law, the Employment Promotion Law, the Compulsory Education Law, the Law on the Protection of Minors, the People's Mediation Law, the Law on the Prevention and Control of Occupational Diseases, the Mental Health Law, the Charity Law, the Anti-domestic Violence Law, the Public Cultural Service Guarantee Law, and the Rules for Rural Five Guarantees Supporting. Some of them are still in the legislative process.

2017 and 2020; the CDPF and five other agencies issued a policy document to improve travel service for disabled persons and seniors in 2018; In the same year, the Supreme People's Court and the CDPF jointly promulgated the Opinions on Effectively Protecting the Disabled Persons' Lawful Rights and Interests in Trial and Enforcement; in 2019, the CDPF, the MOCA, and the MOH issued Working Standard for Community Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons and the CDPF and five agencies jointly enacted General Plan of Improving the System of Employment Security Funds for the Disabled and Promoting Employment of Disabled Persons; and in 2021, the CDPF and four other authorities jointly issued the Measures on Government Agencies and Institutions Taking the Lead in Arranging the Employment of Disabled Persons. Although the CDPF pays attention to almost all aspects of the life of disabled persons, the primary policy issues that it accentuates are as follows: rehabilitation, education, employment, poverty relief, social security, and accessibility (including information accessibility). The CDPF has taken numerous actions to influence policies related to these issues and achieved policy goals substantively.

In the international community, the CDPF actively pushed the Chinese government to sign international treaties benefiting disabled persons. In addition to the CRPD mentioned above, China signed the Marrakesh Treaty in 2013, and the NPC ratified it in 2021. By establishing a set of limitations and exceptions to traditional copyright law, this treaty makes the production and international transfer of specially adapted books for people with blindness or visual impairments easier. After it took effect in China in 2022, the CDPF cooperated with the National Copyright Administration to promote its implementation.

Regarding interest representation, the CDPF makes great efforts to collect and articulate the opinions/demands of disabled persons and tries to influence policies based on these opinions/demands. In so doing, it serves as a bridge between disabled persons and the government.

In addition to the aforementioned research and investigations conducted in the legislative process and the inspections of policy implementation, the CDPF organizes field investigations and studies frequently. For instance, in 2011, the CDPF dispatched 28 groups to 100 counties in 29 provinces to investigate the status quo of disabled persons and supervise local disability-related work. These groups brought valuable first-hand information to the CDPF and discovered various problems. More importantly, these groups communicated in the fields with local governments to advocate for policies favoring disabled persons, settle specific problems, and request more investments in disability-related affairs. In 1987 and 2006, the CDPF organized two rounds of national sample surveys of disabled persons.¹⁸ These surveys were the largest-scale surveys of disabled persons conducted in China. They provided comprehensive data on disabled persons and their lives throughout the country. After the second survey, the CDPF selected a few research topics based on the data and commissioned them to outside bidders. It also created a task force to conclude the survey and deliberate on new policy proposals as responses to newly discovered problems. Consequently, many of the CDPF's policy-related activities in the following years stemmed from the second survey. Furthermore, the CDPF constructed datasets based on the second survey and started routinely monitoring the situation of disabled persons. From 2014 to 2015, the CDPF conducted large-scale surveys of the demands of disabled persons and the basic services provided to them, resulting in dynamic big data of more than 30 million disabled persons. Various policies made in the following years referred to big data. While contacting its constituents regularly, the CDPF established channels for disabled persons to convey and address their grievances. Within the Rights Protection Department, the Division of Petition accepts letters, phone calls, and in-

¹⁸ The first survey was conducted before the CDPF was founded. Its predecessor, the CFDP, lobbied and facilitated that survey. The second survey was larger and more complicated. The CDPF started preparing in 2004, and multiple ministries/institutions and experts were involved in it. Hallett (2015, 182-183) documents the details of these two surveys.

person visits. The CDPF has set up a special rights protection hotline since 2003 and has established an online petition service platform since 2015. Cooperating with eight other ministries/institutions, including the Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuratorate, the MOPS, and the MOJ, the CDPF and its local branches provide legal aid and services to disabled persons (Tang and Regan, 2010).

However, like other organizations in the category of active state corporatism, the CDPF has limitations in representing the interests of disabled persons. Because of its bureaucratic working style and overlong administrative chains, sometimes it is difficult for the CDPF to find out the actual demands of disabled persons; even if it has realized the requests of disabled persons, it may not be as responsive as they desire (Wu and Wu 2022, 352). Cai and Zhou (2008, 155-173) describe and analyze the somewhat negative images of Guangzhou and Lanzhou CDPF local branches in the eyes of disabled persons and persons working in the field of disability based on their surveys and interviews in the two cities conducted in 2004. This is consistent with the author's interviews with leaders of grassroots organizations for disabled persons in Beijing. Deng Pufang also admitted insufficient representation of the CDPF and some disabled persons' distrust of the organization¹⁹. Recent case studies by Ge et al. (2021) find that local branches of the CDPF in a city follow bureaucratic red tape and ostensibly and reluctantly support the employment of disabled persons, resulting in ineffective policy implementation. More importantly, as a state corporatist organization, the CDPF's priority is to serve the state's interests, and it inherently cannot meet the conflicting demands of disabled persons with the state. As Hallett (2015, 175) points out, while the CDPF has helped to give disability a firm place on the political agenda, it has from the start been an arm of the Chinese Party-state, subject to official patronage and identical to

¹⁹ See Deng Pufang's address at the Thirteenth National CDPF Working Conference on March 22, 1999, available at http://2011old.cdpf.org.cn/2008old/wxzx/content/2008-03/27/content_82364_3.htm, accessed January 11, 2012.

other Communist Party organs in its bureaucratic and political structure. For example, before China hosted any international sporting events related to disabled persons, the CDPF would organize working conferences to prevent disabled petitioners from expressing their demands in those events, which is a part of the state's mission of stability maintenance (*weiwen*). Although the CDPF is supposed to represent the interests of all disabled persons in China, it intentionally stays aloof from those politically sensitive persons with disabilities, such as Chen Guangcheng, Ji Zhongxing²⁰, and the Xuzhou chained woman²¹. As far as its relationships with grassroots disability organizations are concerned, the CDPF employs both supportive and constraint measures to ensure their obedience, e.g., the CDPF Beijing branch subsidizes grassroots disability organizations and simultaneously promotes the establishment of Communist Party cells in these organizations (Li 2013, 82-83). The CDPF has been an active actor in the international community since its founding. One of its primary goals is to facilitate China's foreign policy and human rights struggles and strengthen the Chinese government's international image. For example, in recent years, the CDPF pushed for international communications with Belt and Road countries regarding disability-related affairs to facilitate the implementation of China's Belt and Road strategy. For another example, Zhang Haidi served as the President of Rehabilitation International, a well-known international organization for people with disabilities, in 2016 and was re-elected for 2020-2024.

²⁰ Ji Zhongxing was a migrant worker in Dongguan in Guangdong province. According to his statement, security persons assisting the local police assaulted him in 2005. The assault has resulted in his paralysis and loss of working ability. After eight years of unfruitful appeals and petitions, he detonated a self-made explosive at a terminal of the Beijing Capital International Airport in 2013. Ji was the only one injured in the event. He was sentenced to six years in prison afterward. Although the Dongguan police reinvestigated his case in 2005, the investigation result was covered. This event led to significant social percussions. However, the CDPF maintained silence.

²¹ This incident was disclosed in Feng County, Xuzhou, Jiangsu Province, in January 2022. The discovery of a mentally disturbed and unlawfully imprisoned woman who was chained to a wall and who gave birth to eight children sparked a huge public outcry. Facing great public pressure, Chinese authorities later acknowledged that she had schizophrenia, a severe mental disorder, and she was trafficked and abused. Seventeen officials in the county were punished for dereliction of duty in handling the case, and six people were sentenced to imprisonment in April 2023. However, the woman was isolated from others, and the public still questioned the truth and judgment of the case. In the whole process, the CDPF and the ACWF maintained a low profile and failed to endorse the disabled woman.

5.2.2 Policy Influence of the CDPF's Affiliated Organizations

As mentioned before, the CDPF is such an overarching mass organization that no official organizations for disabled persons work outside its system. The CDPF has created 12 social organizations and five special associations registered with the MOCA. However, the CDPF serves as their common supervisory body and controls their resources and management. As far as policy influence is concerned, all these organizations fall into the category of passive state corporatism.

These 12 social organizations are major policy implementation entities in their respective jurisdictions, which was the primary goal of the CDPF in creating them. They seldom participate in other policy stages, and none of them can go through all policy stages. The China Association of Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons is engaged in academic activities and research on techniques related to rehabilitation, relying on specialists throughout the country. The National Paralympic Committee of China, the Special Olympics Committee of China, and the China Sports Association for the Deaf organize sports activities for respective types of disabled persons. The China Association of Special Arts engages in artistic activities and manages affairs related to special arts for all types of disabled persons. The China Council of Lions Clubs provides comprehensive social services relying on its members/volunteers across the country. China Association of Volunteers for Persons with Disabilities, founded in 2015, is another organization that integrates volunteers to provide care and services to disabled persons. The China Commission of Promoting Publicity for the Undertakings of Chinese Disabled Persons aims to strengthen connections with journalists and promote publicity of disability-related affairs. It holds annual contests of Chinese Good News and Newsmakers of Disability-related Affairs.

Before the founding of the CDPF, the CFDP lobbied for and participated in the first national sample survey of disabled persons and the enactment of the Disabled Persons' Law. However, after the merger with the CDPF, it has become merely a foundation that raises funds to support

disability-related affairs. Several organizations may be involved in policy formulation, but these activities were based only on the CDPF's assignment, and they seldom put forward their own policy initiatives. For example, in addition to producing and spreading barrier-free films and television programs, Kangyi Development Center for Barrier-Free Films and Television conducted research and drafted the Standard for Producing Barrier-Free Films and Television to fulfill the CDPF's assignment. For another example, the China Massage Association of Blind Practitioners, which administers the industry of blind massage therapy, sometimes participated in drafting industrial policies. Nevertheless, none of these policies stemmed from its initiation. When it came to the basic rules of the industry, such as the Administrative Measures on Blind Medical Massage, the CDPF took charge and marginalized the association.²² Another organization with more policy-related activities is the China Disability Research Society (CDRS), founded in 2008. Like the Chinese Women's Research Society run by the WSIC, the CDRS' secretariat is situated in the Research Office of the CDPF. Its primary task is to conduct research on the theories and practice of disability-related affairs, relying on outside experts in the field. Unlike the Chinese Women's Research Society, which has a longer history, the CDRS has yet to build a comprehensive network incorporating grassroots organizations and undertake research topics with outside funding. It is the major entity responsible for implementing the research policy of the CDPF, e.g., managing research topics assigned by the CDPF and organizing forums. To date, it has not submitted its own policy initiatives nor shown relative independence from the CDPF. Even the Research Office of the CDPF does not act as an influential think tank in the field of disability. The achievements and influence of both the Research Office of the CDPF and the CDRS are not comparable with those of their counterparts in the ACWF system.

²² In fact, the CDPF was only one of the four major drafters—the MOH, the State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine, the CDPF, and the MOHRSS.

Regarding interest representation, none of the 12 social organizations has a record of actively reaching out to collect and articulate opinions of their constituencies, not to mention influencing policies based on these opinions. Some may serve as a platform to connect grassroots and the government. For example, the CDRS had facilitated organizing 16 Forums on the Development of Disability-related Affairs by 2022. Some grassroots disabled persons and bottom-up organizations had opportunities to communicate with government officials at these forums. Nonetheless, the CDRS never brought forward policy initiatives according to these communications.

After its founding, the CDPF created five special associations to assist its work in five types of disabled persons—the China Association of Persons with Visual Disabilities, the China Association of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the China Association of People with Physical Disabilities, the China Association for Persons with Intellectual Disability and their Relatives, and the China Association of Persons with Psychiatric Disability and their Relatives. The CDPF always controls their leaders and resources and directs their working agendas. The primary function of the five associations is to implement relevant policies for the five types of disabled persons. Sometimes, the CDPF assigns them to participate in policy formulation and evaluation in their respective jurisdictions, but they seldom take part in agenda setting. For example, in 2021, the China Association of the Blind participated in revising the Administrative Measures on Blind Medical Massage. It also provided written proposals for the revisions of the Law on the Standard Spoken and Written Chinese Language and the Teachers Law as directed by the CDPF.²³ For another example, these associations all started to enact group standards in their jurisdictions in recent years. From 2016 to 2020, they enacted 20 group standards regarding providing services to

²³ See the 2021 annual report of the association, available at <http://www.zgmx.org.cn/newsdetail/d-72984-0.html>, accessed April 13, 2023.

disabled persons.²⁴ In rare cases, some individual associations brought up their own policy initiatives²⁵, while following the CDPF's directions is no doubt their everyday working style. It is also the case for interest representation. To fulfill the CDPF's assignments, these organizations regularly reach out to conduct field investigations and studies. They also contributed to those nationwide surveys launched by the CDPF. Although they delivered the data they collected to the CDPF, their consistent efforts to influence policies based on the information were unusual.²⁶ Generally, these five associations fall into the category of passive state corporatism. As Cai and Zhou (2008, 174-204) argue, although these associations in Guangzhou and Lanzhou developed various relationships with local CDPF branches, they all faced the problems of the CDPF's control and shortage of resources, which limited their improving performance. This observation supports the conclusion of this research.

Since 2012, all these five associations have finished registration with the MOCA. In the meantime, the CDPF started allocating more resources to them and encouraging them to strengthen their representation of constituencies and participation in the policy process. For example, with the participation of the CDPF, the China Association of the Blind communicated with the SFDA and the MOE regarding accessibility to food and drug information and blind people's taking English exams, respectively. It also researched challenges the visually impaired people face in old age. The China Association of Persons with Intellectual Disability and Their Relatives condemned illegal labor usage of persons with intellectual disability and contacted various local governments for

²⁴ See an online report at <https://www.cappdr.org/---334>, accessed April 13, 2023.

²⁵ For example, in 2004, the China Association of Persons with Psychiatric Disability and Their Relatives proposed to revise the Electoral Law of the National People's Congress and Local People's Congress to grant persons with psychiatric disability equal political rights.

²⁶ In rare cases, they might try to influence policies based on the opinions they collected. For example, in 2009, the China Association of Persons with Physical Disability submitted to the CDPF an open letter with thousands of signatures of persons with physical disability to express their demand to drive vehicles legally. As the CDPF directed after that, this association and the China Association of the Deaf held a symposium in Xi'an and brought forward proposals to revise a relevant policy stipulated by the MOPS. However, these two associations did not play an agenda-setting role in this case because this issue had been on the CDPF's agenda for many years.

solutions. The project of “supported employment”²⁷ conducted by this association was taken over by the CDPF in 2017 in order to push for relevant national policies. With the participation of the CDPF, the China Association of Persons with Physical Disability communicated with the Civil Aviation Administration in 2013 about the difficulties disabled persons usually meet when traveling by air. In 2015, this association and the CDPF communicated with the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology regarding barrier-free usage of electronic devices by persons with upper limb disabilities and four other ministries regarding their demand for operating vehicles. In 2016, the MOPS revised its policy to allow a part of people with upper limb disabilities or monocular vision impairment to acquire drivers’ licenses. The CDPF has increasingly incorporated these five associations in its policy-related activities and facilitated them to submit proposals to the NPC or the CPPCC since 2012. From 2016 to 2020, these associations created 49 survey reports and submitted 50 proposals to the NPC or the CPPCC.²⁸ In 2019, the CDPF further issued a policy document to strengthen the work of these five associations, including interest representation and policy participation. However, the relationships between these associations and the CDPF remain unchanged. Although they are taking more policy actions, they still bring forward few policy initiatives, and the achievements of their policy actions depend on the involvement of the CDPF. In addition, their consistent efforts to influence policies based on their field investigations and surveys are still unusual. Generally speaking, these five associations remain in the category of passive state corporatism, notwithstanding their potential for developing into active state corporatist organizations in the future.

As discussed before, policy influence modes of state corporatist organizations stem from

²⁷ “Supported employment” provides intensive job support to persons with disabilities, who have traditionally been excluded from competitive workplaces. Based on this form of services, disabled persons work in normal settings together with persons without disabilities and can obtain and maintain employment.

²⁸ See an online report at <https://www.cappdr.org/---334>, accessed April 13, 2023.

the exterior source—state authorization and empowerment. Similarly, policy influence modes of social organizations affiliated with state corporatist organizations result from the authorization and empowerment of their supervisory bodies: If their supervisory organizations grant them the power to participate in the whole policy process, they may act actively to influence policies and represent the interests of their constituencies; if they are not granted the power and merely treated as implementation entities, they will focus on the function and behave passively in policy influence and interest representation; as will be shown in the next chapter, if their supervisory bodies marginalize them even in policy implementation, they can only play a symbolic role.

5.3 Bottom-up Organizations for Disabled Persons

The dominant policy influence mode of bottom-up organizations in the field of disability is embedded pluralism. A cluster of organizations is identified to fall into its subcategory—reduced embedded pluralism. Beijing Huiling was the only outlier that followed the mode of critical pluralism. As in the three fields studied in previous chapters, silent pluralism also exists in this field.

5.3.1 Embedded Pluralism

5.3.1.1 Policy Influence of Huitianyu

Because the pursuit of the Beijing Disabled Youths Club coincided with that of Deng Pufang, and Deng needed echoes from the grassroots when he prepared for the founding of the CDPF, he supported the organization. Since then, the organization has built a good relationship with the CDPF. After Huitianyu was registered, it organized the first disabled persons' team, Tai Chi Softball, in China and performed in various locations. in China and performed in various locations. The 2008 Paralympics provided Huitianyu a further chance to cooperate with the CDPF, which needed their performance in the event (He 2013, 147). Huitianyu utilized this channel well to influence policies. As early as 2005-2006, Huitianyu conducted a project to participate in the

revision of the Disabled Persons' Law, including surveys of disabled persons. It distributed and retrieved questionnaires through four provincial branches of the CDPF. It sent the final proposal report to the CDPF, the MOCA, and the State Council. However, Huitianyu received no response and did not exert a visible influence on the law. When the CDPF enacted the twelfth "five-year plan" for disability-related affairs in 2010, it invited Huitianyu to attend two symposiums for the first time. However, these opportunities were occasional and far from institutionalized. A successful case also emerged in 2010. In the year before, physically disabled persons' exemption from various fees related to their use of motorized tricycles was abolished in practice as a consequence of the reform of incorporating these fees into fuel taxes, which they must pay. In response to these persons' discontent and potential unrest, Huitianyu wrote a letter to the CDPF and had a face-to-face interview with leaders of the CDPF's Rights Protection Department later to warn them of the seriousness of the issue.²⁹ The CDPF responded consequently by communicating with the NDRC and the MOF and submitting proposals to the CPPCC. In November 2010, the MOF and the CDPF jointly issued a policy document stating that physically disabled persons using motorized tricycles would receive fiscal fuel subsidies. Sometimes, Huitianyu monitors policy implementation. For instance, after the promulgation of the Regulation on the Construction of Barrier-Free Environments in 2012, Huitianyu advocated for monitoring its implementation by disabled persons and organized volunteers to check barrier-free facilities multiple times.³⁰

5.3.1.2 Policy Influence of the EDSI

The EDSI also adopted an embedded pluralist approach to influencing policies. When its founder, Zhang Wei, a Ph.D. in Law from Heidelberg University in Germany, returned to China in

²⁹ The information regarding Huitianyu's policy influence was obtained from an author interview with the organization's major leader on January 27, 2011, in Beijing.

³⁰ See a news report at <http://finance.sina.com.cn/roll/20130221/000114598688.shtml>, accessed April 14, 2023.

2008, he criticized multiple institutions and individuals in the field of disability. In contrast, he soon changed his attitude because he realized that a softer stance favored achieving his goals.³¹ He contacted CDPF officials and made friends with them. Gradually, they accepted him and invited him to attend policy-related symposiums. Because the CDPF needs more legal professionals like him, he got opportunities to train CDPF cadres in Beijing or other local branches. In addition to the CDPF, the EDSI sought other informal channels to influence policies. For example, it submitted three proposals to the CPPCC in 2012 through a teacher who was a CPPCC member and participated in the EDSI's forums before. When the Beijing Municipal Government Office of Legislative Affairs revised the Implementation Measures of the Disabled Person's Law in 2011, for another example, it also invited the EDSI for deliberation because the EDSI contacted the office and convinced the officials of its professionalism. Although these activities did not generate significant policy outcomes, the EDSI brought grassroots opinions and its professional proposals to multiple official institutions. Sometimes, the EDSI could influence policies to some extent. In 2011, the EDSI participated in revising the Regulation on the Education of People with Disabilities through personal connections with professors in the Law School of Renmin University, whom the MOE commissioned to draft the revisions. The EDSI successfully persuaded the officials in the panel to accept the participation of parents of disabled children and the Zero Reject principle, i.e., no one disabled child shall be denied education. This principle was finally embodied in the revised policy. Regarding interest representation, the EDSI ran a legal consulting hotline to serve disabled persons across the country, through which it collected opinions of the community. In addition, the EDSI conducted research projects, including field studies.

In 2014, Zhang Wei closed the EDSI and started the commercially registered Xinzhichi

³¹ The information regarding the EDSI's policy influence is based on the author's interview with Zhang Wei on March 20, 2012, in Beijing.

Technology Company, which provides services to children with learning disabilities. Focusing on promoting inclusive education, i.e., placing students with disabilities in regular school classes instead of special institutions, the company supports the CDPF's new agenda. As an expert, Zhang Wei participated in enacting the thirteenth Beijing municipal "five-year plan" for disability-related affairs in 2015 and has become a board member of the CDRS under the CDPF since 2016.

5.3.1.3 Policy Influence of the OPO

The OPO established the first and the only independent media run by disabled persons in China, including a website called Voice of the Blind and an online radio station. It cooperated with over 75 Chinese radio stations to broadcast programs serving disabled persons, including the "Chinese disabled persons' watch" broadcasted through China National Radio. In 2013, it further created Youren Magazine. Since 2016, the organization has developed into OPO Disability Group, incorporating five social organizations, three social enterprises, and one foundation, and managing ten brand projects (Huang 2019, 1008).

In addition to providing a variety of services to disabled persons in multiple locations in the country, it lists "policy advocacy" and "protecting disabled people's rights and interests" as two of its fields of engagement.³² On the one hand, running media outlets and other projects enables the OPO to reach a broad audience, and to listen to and articulate their opinions. On the other hand, it must use caution and implement self-censorship provided the strict media control exercised by the Party-state.³³ The OPO has performed well in applying this embedded approach and maintained good relationships with multiple official institutions. It conducted some projects designated by the CDPF and its local branches and several local bureaus of civil affairs, including surveys and research projects regarding interests of disabled persons. In 2016, Xie Yan, founder

³² See the self-introduction on its website at <http://www.yijiayi.org/en/index.php?catid=20>, accessed October 4, 2018.

³³ According to the author's interview with Xie Yan, the founder and CEO of the OPO, on March 19, 2012, in Beijing.

and the principal leader of the OPO, also became a board member of the CDRS. The CDPF invited the OPO to attend multiple policy-related symposiums, including some discussing “five-year plans” for disability-related affairs. In 2010, it discussed the standards for information accessibility with the National Information Technology Standardization Technical Committee. A few of its proposals were adopted later because of the discussion.³⁴ The OPO invited the officials from the Division of Special Education in the MOE to discuss revising the Regulation on the Education of People with Disabilities in 2011. It also submitted proposals regarding this regulation to the State Council with seven other organizations in 2013. However, this embedded approach does not impair the OPO’s organizational independence. In April 2012, it submitted to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities a shadow report on China’s implementation of the CRPD³⁵, in which the OPO independently evaluates Chinese disability-related policies regarding anti-discrimination, accessibility, education, and employment, and puts forward its own proposals (Hallett 2015, 191-193; Goggin et al. 2019, 43-44). Since 2013, the OPO has promulgated “ten big events regarding the rights of disabled persons” annually. Since 2014, it has published the Annual Observation Report on Disability and organized Voicing Month for Disabled Persons with many fellow organizations every year (Zhang 2017, 1099). Based on these activities, it set up an objective to serve as a think tank in the field of disability. In 2019, the OPO created a project called Canku Think Tank and launched a website and a WeChat public account for the project, aiming to establish a platform for the communication between disabled persons and NGOs, policymakers, researchers, and enterprises. They have discussed a few policy issues on the platform. In 2021, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) published the

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ The Chinese government submitted an official report on August 31, 2010. This shadow report supplements the official report and reflects an independent evaluation of civil organizations (relative to official organizations such as the CDPF).

Guidebook to Media Reports' Promotion of Disability Equality in China prepared by the OPO.³⁶ In 2022, the Report on the Cause for Persons with Disabilities in China (2022), a project coordinated by the CDPF, included the OPO's survey report regarding the employment of the visually impaired people.³⁷ Sometimes the OPO could successfully influence policies, while in other cases its policy efforts might turn out to be unfruitful. For example, in 2015, the OPO submitted a proposal to the State Council regarding the structure of the Regulation on the Prevention of Disability and the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons, but it was eventually rejected.

5.3.1.4 Policy Influence of China-Dolls

China-Dolls is another example of embedded pluralism. Two activists with Osteogenesis Imperfecta (OI), Wang Yiou and Huang Rufang³⁸, founded it in 2008. It has provided services to OI patients and other patients with rare disorders and advocated favorable policies for them since then.³⁹ In 2009, China-Dolls drafted a proposal to enact a special law to protect the interests of patients with rare disorders (Qiaoan 2022, 111). It united five other organizations for rare disorders to collect signatures of patients, their family members, and doctors across the country. Sun Zhaoqi, an NPC representative and a friend of one of the five organizations, drafted the text of the law and submitted the proposal to the NPC with 29 other representatives.⁴⁰ After that, China-Dolls

³⁶ The 2021 report of the OPO, available at <http://www.yijiayi.org.cn/index.php?id=457>, accessed April 14, 2023.

³⁷ The 2022 report of the OPO, available at <http://www.yijiayi.org.cn/index.php?id=461>, accessed April 14, 2023.

³⁸ OI is a congenital gene deficit that results in fragile bones, whereby a high percentage of OI patients have disabilities. This research classifies China-Dolls as an organization for disabled persons instead of one of the health organizations because OI is not a disease that is comparable to or related to HIV/AIDS. Unlike AIDS and hepatitis, OI is not a contagious disease, making substantial social impacts and drawing international attention. It is also different from hemophilia, another rare disorder, because OI patients do not need blood-based drugs, which may carry HIV. Nevertheless, Wang's working experience in Yirenping and Huang's working experience in Aizhixing inspired their idea of creating an organization for patients with rare disorders and improved their capacity to run an independent organization. In the early years of China-Dolls, Aizhixing provided aid such as an office.

³⁹ In 2013, China-Dolls founded another organization led by Huang Rufang—Chinese Organization for Rare Disorders, to strengthen its policy-related work. Although this organization is independent in name, it is an inherent part of China-Dolls. Therefore, this research does not discuss them separately, and the name of China-Dolls means both organizations.

⁴⁰ The author's interviews with Wang Yiou and Huang Rufang on June 1, 2010, in Beijing. According to Gueorguiev (2021, 116-119), proposals with more cosponsors and diverse cosponsorship are more influential within the legislature. It was why Sun Zhaoqi united with many other NPC representatives to submit the proposal.

established connections with some NPC representatives and CPPCC members and sought to submit proposals to the NPC or the CPPCC almost every year. China-Dolls excels in building channels into the official system and advertising its work and ideas through the media. It generally takes a cooperative attitude toward the state and provides excellent patient services (Qiaoan 2022, 111-115). In 2009, the China Social Welfare and Education Foundation launched a special fund for China-Dolls.⁴¹ In 2011, Li Ligu, then Minister of Civil Affairs, visited the office of China-Dolls. Consequently, China-Dolls was granted MOCA registration and won service procurement projects from the MOCA every year. China-Dolls also maintains good relationships with the CDPF system and the MOH. From 2012, China-Dolls held three China Rare Disorder Summits, which constructed a platform for government sectors, experts, social organizations, and the media to discuss various topics related to rare disorders, including policy issues. In 2014, the State Council awarded China-Dolls the title of Home for the Handicapped, and Wang Yiou was named one of the 2014 Top Ten Charity Figures of CCTV (Qiaoan 2022, 113-114).

China-Dolls attaches great importance to articulating and representing the interests of patients with rare disorders. From 2008 to 2021, it conducted eight nationwide sample surveys of living conditions and education of OI patients and other patients with rare disorders, and the consequent reports were released to the public and submitted to the MOCA, the MOE, and the CDPF. These surveys and reports served as a basis for its policy-related work. Since its founding, China-Dolls has established and maintained connections with thousands of patients with rare disorders throughout the country and cultivated or facilitated multiple organizations working for these patients. From 2009 to 2022, China-Dolls held seven OI Patients National Conferences, which assembled hundreds of patients and their family members and other relevant people,

⁴¹ This fund was dissolved in 2019 after their contract expired.

including officials from the MOCA and the CDPF systems. Holding this kind of conference is rare for China's bottom-up social organizations.

After more than a decade since its founding, however, China-Dolls' policy efforts resulted in limited achievements. There is no official definition of rare disorders in China, not to mention a particular law. The MOH established an expert committee for rare disorders in 2016 to formulate an official definition and a list of recognized rare disorders. In 2018, the MOH and four other agencies promulgated the first list of rare disorders, which recognizes 121 rare disorders, including OI (Qiaoan 2022, 110-111). Ironically, the list was made without an official definition of rare disorders. Although the MOCA announced plans to incorporate rare disorders into its charitable relief system multiple times, it has yet to fulfill these plans except by creating a solitary fund for children with rare disorders in 2014. National policies regarding rare disorders still need to be completed. Only a few cities in Shanghai, Shandong, Anhui, Guangdong, and Jiangsu have implemented some measures of extending health insurance and social security to patients with some particular rare disorders.⁴² Bottom-up organizations can make the voices of their constituencies heard by the society and the government. However, the effectiveness of their policy influence is limited.

In rare cases in 2015 and 2016, China-Dolls adopted some approaches of critical pluralism to influence policies. In 2015, it applied for information disclosure to the Civil Aviation Administration after one of its employees had trouble getting off an airplane. In 2016, in response to Baidu's inappropriate commercialization of its online forums and search results, China-Dolls, Yi You Charity, and more than 30 other organizations formed the Alliance Against Fake Online Medical Advertisements. Representatives of the alliance, including members of China-Dolls,

⁴² As Chapter Three introduces, hemophilia is an exception.

denounced the search engine and visited the State Administration for Industry and Commerce (SAIC)⁴³ and the Cyberspace Administration to submit a petition letter with signatures of more than 1,600 netizens. In the meantime, the alliance also applied for information disclosure to multiple agencies. Yuan Nana, founder of Home for People with Growth Hormone Deficiency, even sued the SAIC.⁴⁴ Thanks to these pressures and the unexpected event of Wei Zexi⁴⁵, Baidu was investigated and imposed new restrictions, and the SAIC promulgated the Interim Measures for the Administration of Internet Advertising in July 2016. However, the alliance had no other activities, and China-Dolls no longer took similar actions in the following years. By doing so, it has maintained good relationships with the official system. For example, the NPC invited China-Dolls and 12 other organizations to discuss the enactment of the Charity Law (Tao and Jasper 2022, 111, 118). Although China-Dolls occasionally showed signs of critical pluralism in a short period, it generally remains in the category of embedded pluralism.

In 2016, China-Dolls and Narada Foundation jointly started Illness Challenge Foundation, and Wang Yiou has served as secretary-general and vice president of the board of this new foundation. It is the first foundation in Beijing to focus on rare disorders. In its short history, this foundation had issued eight research reports and held four Rare Disorders Cooperation and Communication Conferences and some symposiums by 2022.⁴⁶ These conferences were the continuation of China Rare Disorder Summits held by China-Dolls and served as new platforms for the communication of all sides. Many policy issues, including national legislation on rare

⁴³ This administration merged into the new State Administration for Market Regulation in March 2018.

⁴⁴ China-Dolls' 2015 and 2016 annual reports presented these cases. They are available at <http://chinadolls.org.cn/type/560>, accessed October 6, 2018.

⁴⁵ According to the introduction on Wikipedia, Wei Zexi was a 21-year-old college student from Shaanxi who died in April 2016 after receiving experimental treatment for synovial sarcoma at the Second Hospital of the Beijing Armed Police Corps, which he learned of from a promoted result on the Chinese search engine Baidu. His death led to public outrage and widespread condemnation of the hospital and Baidu's advertising practice.

⁴⁶ The information is available at <https://www.chinaicf.org/news/organization>, accessed April 14, 2023.

disorders and the affordability of drugs, were discussed. As a sister organization, the policy influence mode of this foundation is the same as that of China-Dolls. With higher fundraising capacity, it will play an essential role in providing services to patients with rare disorders and influencing relevant policies in the future.

5.3.1.5 Policy Influence of Inclusion China

Inclusion China has listed influencing policies as one of its missions since its founding in 2014.⁴⁷ In 2015, it joined the activity Voicing Month for Disabled Persons organized by the OPO and jointly issued a declaration with the latter to condemn the enslavement of intellectually disabled women discovered by the media and to exert pressures on local governments. In its three-year development plan enacted in 2015, promoting inclusive education became its primary policy goal. In 2015, Inclusion China launched the “policy advocacy project of inclusive education” with France-based Handicap International. Since its founding, Inclusion China has intentionally cultivated a good relationship with the CDPF system, especially the China Association of Persons with Psychiatric Disability and Their Relatives. Wen Hong, chairwoman of this association, was invited to be one of its advisors in 2015.⁴⁸ Therefore, the association also endorsed the inclusive education project. In 2016, Inclusion China conducted the first sample survey according to the project plan regarding parents’ needs and teachers’ qualifications. In March 2017, it publicized two reports from the survey at a symposium in which some NPC representatives and CPPCC members participated. They helped Inclusion China submit two proposals to the annual sessions of NPC and CPPCC in the same year. In September, two departments under the MOE responded to their proposals. Encouraged by positive responses from the government, Inclusion China conducted

⁴⁷ See Initial Declaration of Inclusion China, available at <http://www.ngocn.net/news/90680.html>, accessed October 15, 2018.

⁴⁸ See the 2015 Annual Report of Inclusion China, available at <http://www.inclusion-china.org/informationdisclosure/annals>, accessed October 15, 2018.

another nationwide survey regarding school enrollment of all types of disabled children between 6 and 15 years of age with the cooperation of two universities in Beijing. According to survey results, it held two symposiums in December 2017 and March 2018 and issued three reports. In addition, Inclusion China again submitted two proposals to the 2018 sessions of the NPC and the CPPCC through sympathetic NPC representatives and CPPCC members. These proposals called for the improvement of inclusive education and the MOE's inspection of the implementation of the Regulation on the Education of People with Disabilities revised in 2017.⁴⁹

Since Inclusion China registered as the Geng Foundation in 2018, the new organization has also adopted embedded pluralism to influence policies and represent the interests of people with disabilities and their family members. The foundation completed four research reports on inclusive education in 2019 and 2020, based on which it held an online symposium and invited officials and experts to discuss the revision of the Interim Measures on Disabled Children's Learning in Regular Classrooms in 2020. From 2019 to 2021, it continued to facilitate NPC representatives and CPPCC members to submit several proposals each year. In June 2020, the MOE issued a policy document to strengthen the learning mechanisms in regular classrooms. In the same year, the Geng Foundation collected opinions from various stakeholders and submitted proposals to the MOE in response to its solicitation of public opinions for enacting the Early Childhood Education Law. In addition, it maintains a good relationship with the CDPF system. For example, in 2020, the Geng Foundation facilitated the CDPF to edit two guidebooks regarding the protection of and social support services to disabled persons during infectious disease outbreaks.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ The information on these surveys and subsequent policy actions is mainly from the 2017 annual report of Inclusion China, available at <http://www.inclusion-china.org/informationdisclosure/annals>, accessed October 15, 2018.

⁵⁰ See its 2020 and 2021 annual reports, available at <https://www.gengfoundation.com/xxpl>, accessed April 14, 2023.

5.3.1.6 Policy Influence of Rong Ai Rong Le

In its early years, Rong Ai Rong Le focused on providing services to people with intellectual disability, such as physical exercise and cultural and recreational activities, and their parents, such as psychological support and capacity training. Sometimes, it joined policy activities launched by other organizations but seldom initiated such joint activities. The most notable policy achievement of this organization was to promote supported employment. Since 2013, Rong Ai Rong Le has started to practice the supported employment project by cooperating with the CDPF Beijing branch. Persuaded by the joint endeavor of international organizations such as the ILO and domestic advocates such as Fengtai Lizhi and Rong Ai Rong Le, the China Association of Persons with Intellectual Disability and Their Relatives launched experiments on supported employment in seven locations in 2014. In 2015, the Beijing Municipal Government issued policy documents to fund supported employment projects. The CDPF confirmed this practice and incorporated it into the Thirteenth Five-year Plan for Accelerating the Well-off Process of Disabled Persons in 2016.⁵¹

In 2018, Rong Ai Rong Le provided 80% of the original fund to start the Geng Foundation.⁵² Li Hong, executive director of Rong Ai Rong Le, has concurrently served as board president of the Geng Foundation. In cooperation with the Geng Foundation, Rong Ai Rong Le engaged in more policy activities. In 2020, it submitted a policy proposal to the NPC regarding supported employment. The same year, it interpreted the MOE's newly issued policy document about inclusive education together with the Geng Foundation, Inclusion China, and two other organizations via an online media outlet. In the following year, Rong Ai Rong Le and the Geng Foundation jointly submitted a proposal regarding inclusive education to the CPPCC.⁵³

⁵¹ For Rong Ai Rong Le's practice of supported employment and its policy consequence, see its self-introduction at <http://www.co-inclusion.org/job.html>, accessed October 24, 2018, and the 2015 annual report of Inclusion China.

⁵² See the constitution of the Geng Foundation, available at <https://www.gengfoundation.com/jihjs>, accessed April 16, 2023.

⁵³ See work reports of 2020 (January to July) and 2021 (January to May) of Rong Ai Rong Le, available at <http://www.co-inclusion.org/jgjzjb>, accessed April 16, 2023.

5.3.2 Reduced Embedded Pluralism

In the field of migrant workers, the FDI displays a new subcategory of embedded pluralism—reduced embedded pluralism. A few bottom-up organizations in the field of disability also possess similar characteristics of this subcategory. The policy influence mode of these organizations basically conforms to embedded pluralism in terms of policy participation and interest representation, but their policy influence is on a reduced scale. First, they focus on providing services in their daily work and do not pay attention to policy issues systematically. Only when they encounter policy-related difficulties in their daily work would they actively engage in influencing policies. Second, when they are occasionally invited to attend policy activities, they will present proposals, but they often act haphazardly and do not follow up. Third, while they may participate in policy actions organized by other organizations, they initiate policy actions infrequently. Therefore, their willingness, actions, and effectiveness to influence policies are all at the moderate level.

5.3.2.1 Policy Influence of Golden Key

Golden Key focused on the Golden Key Project in its whole history. In its early years, the MOE, known as the State Education Commission then, did not support this project. Deng Pufang endorsed it at a field conference in Wuxi City in 1990, which changed the attitude of the official education system. However, Xu Bailun and Ji Yuqin still faced great difficulties in implementing the project in different localities. They must persuade officials at all administrative levels face to face in different provinces (Hsu 2017, 55), while the outcomes were contingent on local milieus and the personal virtues of officials in charge of education.⁵⁴ Eventually, they succeeded in Guangxi, Inner Mongolia, eight counties in Shaanxi, and four counties in Heilongjiang. Once a

⁵⁴ According to the author's interviews with Xu Bailun and Ji Yuqin on March 12, 2012, in Beijing.

region accepted the project, the government issued multiple local policy documents, some of which were based on Golden Key's drafts. Golden Key never opposed governments in the whole process. Instead, it tried to maintain good relationships with the MOE, the CDPF, the ACWF, and the CCYL. Although it participated in the whole policy process regarding the Golden Key Project, it was never involved in other policy issues. Sometimes, the MOE and the CDPF invited Xu to attend their meetings, but Xu seldom presented his policy proposals. Golden Key conducted surveys of visually impaired children's school enrollment and submitted the results to the CPPCC via a friend and to high-level party leaders via internal publications. However, it never followed up, and these activities did not produce specific policy outcomes.⁵⁵

Since 2010, Xu and Ji gradually quit Golden Key with advancing age. China Braille Library under the CDPF took over the organization and made it officially registered in 2013 (Hsu C. 2017, 61). With the support of the CDPF, the Golden Key Project has been extended to more areas in China. More importantly, the CDPF and the MOE increasingly embrace the notion of inclusive education, the tenet of the Golden Key Project. In 2017, inclusive education appeared in the revised Regulation on the Education of People with Disabilities. In the revised policy, general education becomes the first and foremost choice for disabled people, along with complementary special education as an optional choice, which differs from the special education priority principle in the past (Zhao and Zhang 2018, 134).

5.3.2.2 Policy Influence of Hongdandan

Hongdandan provides barrier-free cultural products and services, mainly various voice performances, to the visually impaired (Fulda et al. 2015, 163-164). Its main projects include the Heart & Eye Theater, Library, and Drama Workshop, the Experiencing Three Days of Darkness

⁵⁵ Ibid.

project, and the Beijing Life Map for Blind Persons. Hongdandan generally maintains a cooperative relationship with the official system. It obtained MOCA registration in 2013 under the facilitation of the Capital Philanthropy Federation, an organization affiliated with the Beijing Bureau of Civil Affairs. In 2007, the China Youth Development Foundation under the CCYL established a special fund for Hongdandan. Although its relationship with the CDPF was not good initially, they tried to approach each other later.⁵⁶ The CDPF invited Hongdandan to attend its meeting regarding the twelfth “five-year plan” in 2010. Zheng Xiaojie presented her proposals, but she never followed whether these proposals were adopted or not.⁵⁷ Wang Xinxian, then vice chairman of the CDPF, and Lü Xiwen, then Deputy Communist Party Secretary of Beijing, visited Hongdandan in 2014. Since 2011, Hongdandan has won service procurement projects from the government every year. One project in 2016 involved organizing blind volunteers to monitor barrier-free public services, a rare policy-related project it conducted. Occasionally, Hongdandan participated in policy actions initiated by others. For example, in 2011, it signed a letter drafted by Beijing Huiling to complain about the unfair funding distribution by the CDPF Beijing branch. However, only in rare cases would Hongdandan initiate policy actions. For instance, it had not submitted any proposals to the CPPCC until 2012.⁵⁸ Generally, it spends most of its time providing services while influencing policies only when meeting policy-related difficulties in daily work. For example, in 2011, Dong Lina, one of Zheng’s blind students, was denied attending the Self-taught Higher Education Examinations in Beijing because of her disability. Hongdandan helped Dong file a complaint of the Beijing Education Examinations Authority to the Beijing Municipal Commission of Education and launched a media campaign to expose the event. Facilitated by

⁵⁶ According to the author’s interview with Zheng Xiaojie, Hongdandan’s founder and board chairperson, on March 13, 2012, in Beijing.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

Hongdandan, a blind young man in Anhui Province initiated a signature campaign to exert pressure on the authorities. Eventually, the Beijing Municipal Commission of Education changed its policy after allowing Dong to attend the examinations. In the wake of this event, some other provinces, such as Fujian and Henan, also changed their policies.⁵⁹ In 2015, the MOE promulgated Regulations on Disabled People's Participation in College and University Enrolment Exams, which requires the government to provide equal opportunities and reasonable accommodations to disabled persons for their participation in these exams (Tang and Cao 2018, 1172; Huang 2019, 1005).

5.3.2.3 Policy Influence of Fengtai Lizhi

Fengtai Lizhi also falls into the subcategory of reduced embedded pluralism. When Xiao Peilin founded this organization in 2000, she received the government's support and registered with the MOCA Fengtai branch. Since then, it has established three related organizations and extended its business to multiple locations in China. Focusing on the education of people with learning disabilities over 16 years old and taking a cooperative attitude toward the government, Fengtai Lizhi has received various governments' subsidies annually and won multiple governments' rewards and service procurement projects. It maintains close contact with the MOCA system and the CDPF system. Based on its long-term practice of supported employment, Fengtai Lizhi lobbied and facilitated the China Association of Persons with Intellectual Disability and their Relatives to conduct a similar project in 2013. Sometimes, official institutions invited Fengtai Lizhi to attend policy meetings. For example, the district CDPF office often invited it to attend meetings discussing work plans or work reviews. The MOE and the CDPF once invited Fengtai Lizhi to discuss the Regulation on the Education of People with Disabilities. Xiao presented her

⁵⁹ Zheng Xiaojie presented this case to the author during the March 13, 2012 interview in Beijing.

proposals. However, she neither received any feedback nor followed up.⁶⁰ Occasionally, Fengtai Lizhi participated in policy actions initiated by Beijing Huiling, Huitianyu, or other organizations. However, it would intentionally avoid those issues that the government might deem radical.⁶¹ In 2010, Fengtai Lizhi invited more than 60 bottom-up organizations for disabled persons in China to attend a forum and then started the China Intellectual Disability Development Network. However, Fengtai Lizhi did not invest much in this network and had little policy cooperation with this network except for promoting supported employment.

Like other organizations in this subcategory, Fengtai Lizhi does not regularly touch policy issues and is only actively involved in influencing policies when meeting policy-related difficulties in daily work. For example, in 2005, one of Fengtai Lizhi's students hit a person and was sued. Because people with intellectual disability in China are ineligible for purchasing personal accident insurance, the student met significant troubles. Fengtai Lizhi and the CASS conducted surveys and published a report, based on which Fengtai Lizhi submitted a proposal to the CPPCC via acquainted members. It also held symposiums and submitted proposals to the MOCA through one of its board members, an official of the MOCA. However, all the efforts turned out to be unfruitful: the government never responded, and commercial companies still denied insurance to people with intellectual disability. Another failed case occurred in 2006. After losing a rented farm for educational purposes and investments in the farm, Fengtai Lizhi launched a media campaign and held a symposium to lobby for new policies protecting public-interest property rights. Like the last case, the government never responded. However, sometimes Fengtai Lizhi could achieve its goal. In 2011, the Fengtai District Local Taxation Bureau suddenly demanded Fengtai Lizhi pay the business tax. Fengtai Lizhi responded by submitting a proposal to the Beijing CPPCC via one of

⁶⁰ According to the author's interview with Feng Lu, deputy director of Fengtai Lizhi, on March 20, 2012, in Beijing.

⁶¹ Ibid.

its board members, who was also a member of the Beijing CPPCC. The proposal complained that nonprofit organizations should not pay the business tax, but the local taxation bureau would collect illegally. This action exerted significant pressure on relevant authorities. Eventually, Fengtai Lizhi and most of the other similar organizations in the same district were exempt from the business tax.⁶² No matter whether Fengtai Lizhi won or lost, however, these cases occurred sporadically in its history.

5.3.2.4 Policy Influence of Stars and Rain

Stars and Rain focuses on providing services to autistic children and their family members. It maintained a loose connection with the government for a period. Although Tian Huiping had a reputation as a critic in the field, her personal words have never been translated into organizational policy-related actions. Since her semi-retirement in 2008, she has become gentler and more inclined to interact with the government.⁶³ In 2009, Stars and Rain held a symposium on social policies related to disabled children with the aid of an expert in the CASS who was also a board member of Stars and Rain. Officials from the MOCA, the CDPF, and the ACWF attended the symposium. From that event, Stars and Rain has built good relationships with official agencies and organizations. In 2010, the China Charities Aid Foundation for Children under the MOCA helped it set up a special fund. Tian was selected as a member of the Children Service Standard Committee in the MOCA and participated in enacting relevant standards. Sun Zhongkai, executive director of Stars and Rain, also took part in enacting the Professional Standard for Social Workers Serving Children. However, they did not make consistent efforts to influence these policies.⁶⁴ In general, Stars and Rain does not pay attention to policy issues systematically and only makes policy

⁶² Feng Lu presented these three cases during the interview.

⁶³ These comments were based on the author's interviews with multiple organizational leaders in the field of disability.

⁶⁴ The author's interview with Sun Zhongkai on April 6, 2012, in Beijing.

initiatives in rare cases. For example, after the CDPF Beijing branch designated it as a rehabilitation institution, it became more aware of the financial difficulties of affected families. Therefore, Stars and Rain successfully lobbied the CDPF Beijing branch to provide annual subsidies to families with autistic children in 2009.⁶⁵

In 2005, Stars and Rain organized Heart Alliance with similar organizations to build a nationwide network combatting autism. Serving as the network's coordinating organization, Stars and Rain was registered with the Beijing Bureau of Civil Affairs under the official name of Beijing Heart Alliance Autistic Children Care Center. However, Stars and Rain never launched collective policy actions using this network (Li 2013, 88-89).⁶⁶ In addition, several factors, including insufficient capacity and inter-organizational competition, negatively affect the cohesion and sustainable development of the network (Li 2013, 80-82). Since its inception, this alliance has always focused on communication, training, and capacity building and has not engaged in influencing policies.

5.3.2.5 Policy Influence of God-Gifted Garden

God-Gifted Garden specializes in rehabilitating people with learning disabilities by applying art therapy. Since its founding in 2006, it has focused on this service and seldom touched on policy issues. The government never invited God-Gifted Garden to attend policy meetings and, it neither joined policy actions launched by other organizations nor started collective policy actions.⁶⁷ If it had not encountered some difficulties in its daily work and taken action, it would have behaved in the same way as silent pluralist organizations. In 2009-2010, it was involved in conflicts with local residents who refused to be neighbors of people with learning disabilities and

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Information on the alliance's actions since its founding is available at <http://www.guduzh.org.cn/?cat=107> and in Stars and Rain's annual reports, available at <http://www.guduzh.org.cn/?cat=76>, accessed April 16, 2023.

⁶⁷ Its founder, Wang Chunhong, admitted this when the author interviewed her on March 19, 2012, in Beijing.

obstructed the road to its building. God-Gifted Garden communicated with the local government and invited the district office and the Beijing branch of the CDPF to be mediators. With the help of some volunteers, a notable CCTV program exposed the event and called for understanding between disabled persons and local residents. Eventually, the residents' leader, who was also the party secretary of the community, resigned, and then the event subsided. Although God-Gifted Garden always tries to maintain good relationships with the official system, the Chaoyang district CDPF office suddenly suspended its annual inspection in 2011 with the excuse of its financial deficits. This action was based on a local policy issued by the office, which God-Gifted Garden deemed illegal and unfair. The organization contacted face to face with multiple authorities, including the office itself, the Beijing CDPF branch, and the district government, requesting to repeal the policy and redefine the CDPF's responsibilities. After two years of efforts, the office approved its annual inspection, while the policy remained untouched.⁶⁸

5.3.3 Critical Pluralism

In the field of disability, Beijing Huiling was the only exceptional organization that adopted the mode of critical pluralism to influence policies. Its critical attitude toward the state had been well known in this field.⁶⁹ Whenever the governments solicited public opinions on relevant policies, Beijing Huiling responded and audaciously brought forward critical opinions. It submitted proposals to the CPPCC via acquainted members in 2006 and 2007, complaining about strict requirements for MOCA registration and limited government procurement opportunities. Some sympathetic NPC representatives also spoke on behalf of Beijing Huiling at NPC meetings to call for auditing the CDPF.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Wang Chunhong presented these two cases during the interview.

⁶⁹ Multiple organizational leaders in the field of disability mentioned Meng Weina's aggressiveness.

⁷⁰ This research mainly cites information on Beijing Huiling's policy actions from an interview with Meng Weina conducted on March 14, 2012, in Beijing.

Like other organizations in the category of critical pluralism, Beijing Huiling applied aggressive approaches to influence policies. Writing letters, including open letters, to relevant agencies, organizations, and individual officials was the most frequent means it adopted. In the late 1980s, Meng Weina wrote to Deng Pufang to criticize the bureaucratization of the CDPF. After that, she penned multiple letters to criticize the CDPF's monopoly of resources. An online open letter in 2006 attracted public attention and triggered discussions. In 2008, Meng posted an open letter to Hu Jintao on the internet complaining that organizations for disabled persons could not obtain funding in the year of the Paralympics. She also sent a few letters to former premier Wen Jiabao to request his attention on Beijing Huiling, although she never received a response. Reaching out to mobilize constituencies was another means Beijing Huiling applied. For example, in response to the case of enslaving people with intellectual disability discovered in Sichuan Province in 2010, Beijing Huiling drafted an open letter and launched a signature campaign. After obtaining more than 1,000 signatures from volunteers and family members of people with intellectual disability across the country, the letter was sent to CDPF branches and Public Security Bureaus in various locations, to hold them accountable for the security of people with intellectual disability. Beijing Huiling also produced a drama based on this story, and its students performed it in different localities.

Thanks to these aggressive actions, Beijing Huiling was often harassed by the local Industry and Commerce Bureau for annual inspection and the local Taxation Bureau for pursuing tax payments. In August 2009, as a response to a particular action toward Beijing Huiling launched by the local Taxation Bureau, Beijing Huiling organized its teachers, students, and their family members into several groups and visited local CDPF offices and relevant government agencies. In addition to this collective petition, it prepared to sue the CDPF Beijing branch. Under these

pressures, the local Taxation Bureau withdrew, and the CDPF Beijing branch granted Beijing Huiling subsidies in exchange for abandoning the litigation. In fact, Beijing Huiling employed these radical approaches from the outset. In its early years in Guangzhou, Meng Weina organized a demonstration before the Guangzhou People's Congress, demanding legal registration and government support. She also threatened to demonstrate again in 1990, one year after the Tiananmen Square protests. Eventually, all her requests were satisfied.

Like some other organizations following the critical pluralist mode, Beijing Huiling sometimes went beyond its usual working area and involved itself in more politically sensitive issues. The most prominent issue was regarding religion. Although Beijing Huiling is a secular organization, Meng herself is a Catholic and cares about religious affairs, sometimes involving Beijing Huiling. Meng sent a few letters to the State Administration for Religious Affairs to advocate for improving the welfare of churchmen and to elucidate her opinions against the politicization of religions in China. She also reported Ma Yinglin, the leading Bishop of the Bishops Conference of the Catholic Church in China, for his misbehaviors. Unfortunately, this action eventually failed and led to investigations of Beijing Huiling. According to Meng, state security police and public security police often visited Beijing Huiling and became the most accessible state organs for the organization. Some Catholic sisters from Guangzhou once stayed at Beijing Huiling for training purposes, where they had collective prayers outside of state-recognized churches. Because the authorities banned this activity, the State Administration for Religious Affairs and the Ministry of State Security threatened to shut it down unless it made a self-criticism. After Beijing Huiling refused to do so, the Guangzhou Bureau of Civil Affairs submitted a written self-criticism, and then the event subsided.⁷¹

⁷¹ The author's interview with Meng Weina on March 14, 2012, in Beijing.

Some organizational leaders the author interviewed admitted there were not many collective actions to influence policies in the field of disability. Beijing Huiling served as the leading organization in most of such actions, which showed its intention to build coalitions in influencing policies, albeit not very successful. Regarding the effectiveness of policy influence, Beijing Huiling was moderate. As Meng stated, Beijing Huiling never had significant achievements in influencing policies except in requesting funding and other resources in some cases, whereas its efforts had impacts on both the government and the society.⁷² While it took a critical attitude, Beijing Huiling did not oppose the state generally and always sought interactions with the official system. Some individual MOCA and CDPF officials visited Beijing Huiling, and the CDPF even designated a service procurement project to it in 2010.

However, its relationship with the official system was unfriendly in general. As a consequence, Beijing Huiling is the only Huiling organization for which the MOCA denies registration (Hallett 2015, 181; Fulda et al. 2015, 162). To circumvent this identity dilemma and attract more resources, Meng Weina registered the Guangdong Huiling Foundation in 2013, taking advantage of the relatively open environment for social organizations in Guangdong Province. The following year, she moved the headquarters of Huiling organizations to this foundation. Beijing Huiling has since become a local organization focusing on providing services.

Obtaining nonprofit status and relatively stable funding sources, Huiling organizations expanded quickly across the country. A more important result is that Meng Weina had to change the original policy influence mode to ensure the Guangdong Huiling Foundation's safety. Although she still occasionally criticized the CDPF and some policies in the field of disability, such as the Disabled Persons' Law, she has generally stopped employing aggressive approaches to influence

⁷² Ibid.

policies and avoided politically sensitive issues, including religious affairs. After moving to Guangzhou, her only aggressive action was to send a letter to Xi Jinping in 2017, complaining that Beijing Huiling was forced to move out of its workplace. In the meantime, she cultivated a new executive leadership to manage daily work. Major leaders, such as Zhang Wujian and Zhang Lihong, take a mild stance and try to build channels into the official system. The management team incorporated some CCP members, and many Huiling organizations established Party branches.⁷³ The Guangzhou Bureau of Civil Affairs invited Zhang Wujian to be a social organization advisor. Therefore, the Guangdong Huiling Foundation embraces embedded pluralism instead of critical pluralism to influence policies. Sometimes, it also cooperated with other organizations adopting embedded pluralism. For example, it participated in Voicing Month for Disabled Persons, organized by the OPO, multiple times. In 2019, it joined four other organizations, including the OPO and China-Dolls, to initiate the China Disability and Sustainable Development Forum, which aims to discuss policy issues and promote social inclusion and sustainable development of disabled persons. In December 2022, the Guangdong Huiling Foundation hosted the second summit of the China Disability and Sustainable Development Forum in Guangzhou. After switching to a mild stance, the Guangdong Huiling Foundation and Meng Weina received several honors: in 2018, CCTV included the foundation in its program called CCTV Charity Night; in the same year, gongyi.ifeng.com, a new media owned by Phoenix Television, awarded Meng Weina “2018 Actors’ Alliance ten charity figures;” in 2019, she received the Compassion Award from the Hong Kong & Macau Taiwanese Charity Fund. They could not have received these honors if they had stuck to critical pluralism.

5.3.4 Silent Pluralism

⁷³ In fact, Zhang Lihong is a CCP member. For a list of CCP members in Huiling organizations, see its publicized information at <http://www.hlcn.org/home/informationCate/detail/id/5.html>. Another news report accentuating the leading role of these Party members can be found at <http://www.hlcn.org/home/newsCate/detail/id/57.html>, both accessed on October 18, 2020.

Some bottom-up organizations in the field of disability display silent pluralism. Zhiguang is a typical example. It exclusively focuses on providing educational services to people with learning disabilities and shows little interest in policy issues. Zhiguang never initiated any policy-related activities or participated in collective actions initiated by other bottom-up organizations, including signature campaigns. Occasionally, the CDPF invited Zhiguang to attend its meetings to discuss such policies as the twelfth “five-year plan” and the Disabled Persons’ Law. Zhiguang presented some proposals at those meetings but never followed up.⁷⁴ Like Fengtai Lizhi and God-Gifted Garden, Zhiguang was also involved in conflicts with its landlords and forced to move out five times. Unlike those two organizations, however, Zhiguang neither initiated any activities to influence relevant policies/agencies nor exposed these events to the media. On the contrary, it opted to maintain silence.⁷⁵ Regarding interest representation, although Zhiguang shows sympathy to disabled persons, it does not reach out to collect their opinions and influence policies based on them. For example, Wang Lijuan realized the inapplicability of some policies regarding supported employment and complained that many disabled persons suffered from fake employment⁷⁶ and unpaid wages.⁷⁷ However, she never engaged in activities to influence those policies. Even though Zhiguang established the Special Olympics Caring Farm, which implemented supported employment, it did not join other organizations to advocate for relevant policies.

According to the author’s interviews with some organizational leaders, the overarching CDPF, as an official competitor, may squeeze out available resources for bottom-up organizations. Some organizations died because of limited resources. These dead organizations usually existed in

⁷⁴ According to the author’s interview with Wang Lijuan, the founder and principal of Zhiguang, on March 22, 2012, in Beijing.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ In 1995, China introduced a system that levies a fee on employers who fail to meet the legal minimum requirement of 1.5% for employment of disabled people. To avoid either hiring people with disabilities or paying levies, some enterprises falsify their records to show they have hired enough disabled persons (Liao, 2021).

⁷⁷ The author’s interview with Wang Lijuan on March 22, 2012, in Beijing.

more disadvantaged conditions when they lived; therefore, they could hardly influence policies, so they usually fell into the category of silent pluralism. The United Stakeholder is such an example. It was the first bottom-up organization working for deaf children. Because of exhausted financial and human resources, it ceased to exist shortly after it started in 2008. According to the author's interview with Zhao Shanjun⁷⁸, former executive director of the United Stakeholder, the organization had insufficient capacity to rehabilitate deaf children. Since the CDPF launched a project to implant free artificial cochlea for deaf children in 2009, the organization's further existence has become meaningless. Therefore, no other similar organizations were established in the following years. The United Stakeholder never engaged in any policy activities during its short existence. Similar stories occurred in the histories of the China Association for Entrepreneurs of the Handicapped, the China Association for the Promotion of Mutually Help in Disabled Persons, and the China Car Club for Disabled Persons. These organizations all suffered from insufficient resources and ceased working, and they never initiated or participated in any policy-related activities.⁷⁹

Applying the criteria developed before, this chapter studies 11 internet websites in the field of disability. Similar to their counterparts in other fields, these websites also display the mode of silent pluralism: all focus on providing services to disabled persons; none has ever engaged in policy activities. Even websites providing legal services are not exceptional. For example, a special website established by www.66law.cn⁸⁰ provided legal services to disabled persons to promote employment. However, the website only publicized existing laws, regulations, or other policies

⁷⁸ The author's interview with Zhao Shanjun on March 14, 2012, in Beijing.

⁷⁹ The information is according to the author's online interviews with Liu Qing, the founder of the China Association for Entrepreneurs of the Handicapped, and Luan Qiping, the founder of the latter two organizations, on March 12, 2012. Both Liu and Luan are physically disabled persons. Although Luan Qiping sued the former Ministry of Railways in 2009 and the Shenzhen Metro Group in 2010 for the benefit of disabled persons and won the latter case, he participated in these lawsuits as an individual instead of a representative of the organizations. In other words, the organizations were not involved in these lawsuits.

⁸⁰ A search in March 2015 showed that www.66law.cn had incorporated the special website.

but never tried to influence policies. Some well-developed websites⁸¹ are influential among disabled persons. They act as quasi-formal organizations because of their great deal of offline activities. Like most other websites, however, they include little policy information and never organize policy activities. Although sporadic posts calling for influencing specific policies were found on some websites⁸², other posts swamped them, and few people followed them. As a result, none of them led to policy-related actions.

5.4 Summary

This chapter discusses the policy influence of social organizations for disabled persons. It discovers five of the six policy influence modes. Symbolic state corporatism is the only missing mode.

As the overarching top-down mass organization, the CDPF falls into active state corporatism, with limitations in representing the interests of disabled persons. Although 12 social organizations and five special associations are nominally independent, they are, in fact, affiliated with the CDPF and serve as its arms to implement policies in their respective jurisdictions. The CDPF does not endow them with the power to participate in the whole policy process, which shows policy influence modes of social organizations affiliated with state corporatist organizations result from authorization and empowerment of their supervisory bodies.

In bottom-up organizations, embedded pluralism is the mainstream mode of policy influence. Most prominent national organizations in the field of disability embrace this mode. Reduced embedded pluralism, introduced primarily in the last chapter, is found in more cases within these organizations. Organizations in this subcategory basically conform to the

⁸¹ For example, www.birdwo.com and www.canjiren.org. A search in April 2023 showed that they had stopped working.

⁸² For example, www.2000888.com, www.mangren.org, and www.ai999.com. A search in October 2018 showed that the latter two had stopped working.

characteristics of embedded pluralism, but their policy influence is on a reduced scale. In addition to internet websites, a handful of organizations fall into the category of silent pluralism, including some disappeared ones. In 2015 and 2016, China-Dolls employed some approaches of critical pluralism, but it generally remains in the category of embedded pluralism. Beijing Huiling was the single outlier displaying critical pluralism in the field. Meng Weina played a crucial role in shaping Beijing Huiling's mode of policy influence. Like many organizations adopting the same mode, Beijing Huiling experienced state oppression. To avoid further persecution and attract more resources, Meng Weina registered the Guangdong Huiling Foundation as the new headquarters and switched to embedded pluralism afterward. As discovered before, some organizations in the fields of women and health also used these strategies. It turned out that the transformation contributed to the survival and expansion of Huiling organizations. However, critical pluralism has disappeared in the landscape of disability, as in the other three fields previously studied. Excluding Beijing Huiling, both organizations founded/led by disabled persons and organizations created/led by sympathetic others are present in the (sub) categories of embedded pluralism, reduced embedded pluralism, and silent pluralism. It is consistent with the conclusion drawn before whether an organization is group-based is not a factor affecting its mode/level of policy influence.

Three organizational networks are identified in the field of disability—the China Intellectual Disability Development Network, Heart Alliance, and Inclusion China. In contrast to some of their counterparts in the fields of women and health that embraced critical pluralism to influence policies actively, only Inclusion China actively influences policies by adopting the mode of embedded pluralism, whereas the other two are silent in the policy arena. It reflects the scarcity of critical pluralism in the field of disability. However, the networks in this field have a higher survival chance. While many networks in the fields of women and health have disappeared, these

three networks in the field of disability are still working.

The categorization of policy influence of organizations for disabled persons is summed up in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Categorization of the Policy Influence of Organizations for Disabled Persons

top-down organizations	active state corporatism	CDPF
	passive state corporatism	12 social organizations and five special associations within the CDPF system (nominally independent)
	symbolic state corporatism	
bottom-up organizations	embedded pluralism	Huitianyu, EDSI/Xinzhichi, OPO, China-Dolls/Illness Challenge Foundation, Inclusion China/Geng Foundation, Rong Ai Rong Le, Guangdong Huiling Foundation
	reduced embedded pluralism	Golden Key, Hongdandan, Fengtai Lizhi, Stars and Rain, God-Gifted Garden
	critical pluralism	Beijing Huiling (before 2014)**, China-Dolls (2015-16 only signs)
	silent pluralism	Zhiguang, United Stakeholder, and three other organizations; 11 internet websites

Note: Organization with “**” experienced state oppression but changed mode of policy influence and survived.

Huang (2019) argues that a nascent disability rights movement emerged after China ratified the CRPD in 2008. However, the recent changes, such as a more restrictive political environment and limited space for civil society, undermined the process by marginalizing the rights advocacy approach. As a result, service-oriented organizations have thrived and promoted disability rights consciousness in their daily work. While this argument roughly depicts the development trajectory of China’s disability organizations, it is only partially correct. Admittedly, the restrictive political environment has compressed the space of these organizations and made them invest more in service provision in recent years. Nonetheless, these challenges only forced some of them to adjust policy influence approaches rather than abandoning advocacy altogether. The headquarters of Huiling organizations moved to Guangzhou, and it switched from critical pluralism to embedded pluralism. China-Dolls apparently exercised self-censorship and became more cautious in influencing policies. However, these two organizations, including the Illness Challenge

Foundation as the sister organization of China-Dolls, remain active in the policy arena by adopting embedded pluralism. In fact, most disability organizations remain in their original modes of policy influence despite the changing political environment. Compared with the three types of organizations studied previously, the government did not force any disability organization to shut down. As long as they maintain service provision and acceptable policy influence mode to the state, they still enjoy some developmental space, and the nascent disability rights movement still has opportunities to move on.

Chapter 6 SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR MINORS AND SENIORS

This chapter discusses social organizations for minors and seniors. It further tests the previously developed analytical framework. The first section studies social organizations for minors, and the second covers those for seniors. Each section includes a summary. The last section is a comprehensive conclusion for the policy influence of social organizations for disabled persons, minors, and seniors.

6.1 Social Organizations for Minors

According to the Law on the Protection of Minors (the Minors' Law hereafter) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which has taken effect in China since 1992, "minors" used in this research means persons below the age of eighteen years. Applying this standard, data from the 2010 National Population Census show China has nearly 279 million minors, including almost 150 million males and more than 129 million females.¹ The 2020 National Population Census reveals 298 million minors, with 158 million males and 139 million females.² The ACWF and the CCYL in China officially represent this group. There is no clear boundary, however, between their jurisdictions. In practice, infants, toddlers, and preschoolers are the sole responsibility of the ACWF, and juveniles between 14 and 17 years old are objects of the CCYL, although its membership covers youths from 14 to 28 years old according to its constitution. The CCTL is responsible for Children aged 6 to 13.³ However, the ACWF also takes care of minors in this stage.⁴ Moreover, the ACWF represents all female minors according

¹ China 2010 Population Census Materials, published by China Statistics Press in 2012.

² What the 2020 Census Can Tell Us About Children in China: Facts and Figures, published in 2023 by the National Bureau of Statistics of China, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) China, and the United Nations Population Fund China. It is available at <http://www.stats.gov.cn/zs/tjwh/tjkw/tjzl/202304/P020230419425670560273.pdf>, accessed April 23, 2023.

³ Although children at this stage are not members of the CCYL, most of them are members of the Chinese Young Pioneers, a subordinate organ of the CCYL.

⁴ See Lu Shizhen et al. (2005), p. 3.

to its constitution, regardless of age. In addition to the ACWF and the CCYL, other top-down organizations for minors exist inside or outside the systems of these two mass organizations. However, the Party-state does not grant any of them the status of representing minors. As previously introduced, a handful of bottom-up social organizations are identified in this field. Except for one prominent organization, they exert no significant influence on policies regarding minors.

6.1.1 Top-down Organizations for Minors

In this part, two separate subsections study the ACWF and the CCYL, the two mass organizations in this field. The last subsection covers all the other top-down social organizations working inside or outside these systems.

6.1.1.1 Policy Influence of the ACWF

In addition to representing women, the ACWF has been granted the status of representing minors since its founding. Before the Cultural Revolution, the ACWF focused on providing services, mainly establishing childcare facilities across the country, and was seldom involved in policymaking. After its restoration, the Party-state once again assigned “children’s work (*ertong gongzuo*)” to the ACWF and began to emphasize its function of protecting the interests of women and children.⁵ As Chapter Two introduces, the ACWF realized environmental changes in the reform era and has tried to adapt to the new environment to ensure its status in the political system. It incorporated protecting the interests of women and children in its constitution and established a committee to coordinate “women’s work” and “children’s work” across ministries, which developed into the NWCCW in 1993. It also created a particular Department of Children’s Work to administrate its activities in this field. In addition, the Department of Rights and Interests of the

⁵ See Section 2.4 in Chapter Two.

ACWF also participates in policy-related activities and rights protection regarding minors, thanks to its legal expertise. In 2017, the NWCCW established the Children's Work Think Tank by recruiting various specialists.

As in the women's field, the ACWF plays an active role in the policy process in the field of minors. It has served as the major advocate, drafter, and implementation entity of four Outlines of Chinese Children's Development (1992-2000, 2001-2010, 2011-2020, 2021-2030), and it also successfully lobbied the central government to incorporate main targets of the outlines into national "five-year plans." Regarding important policies for which it did not serve as the major drafter, the ACWF actively participated in the policymaking processes and made every effort to realize its policy initiatives. Examples include the Minors' Law, the Law on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency, the Adoption Law, the Law on Maternal and Infant Health Care and its Implementation Measures, the Criminal Law, the Interim Measures for Social Assistance, three National Action Plans against Human Trafficking (2008-2012, 2013-2020, 2021-2030), the National Outline of Medium and Long-term Educational Reform and Development (2010-2020), and China's Education Modernization 2035. The ACWF and its local branches submit numerous policy proposals regarding minors to the NPC and the CPPCC at respective levels/regions every year. It also edits several internal publications and regularly submits them to the Central Committee of the CCP. As mentioned, the ACWF has the power to issue policy documents with other ministries or institutions jointly and to create policy documents by itself. In addition to the NWCCW, the ACWF constructed other mechanisms to coordinate other agencies and mass organizations, such as the Joint Conference of Leading Groups of "Five Activities"⁶ and the

⁶ Since the 1990s, the ACWF has created five long-term activities regarding women and children. Their leading groups include relevant agencies of the Party-state or other mass organizations and have provided the ACWF access to other policymakers and implementation entities. Since 2010, the five leading groups have merged into one joint conference. These five activities include "double learnings and double competitions (*shuang xue shuang bi*)," "heroines' feats (*jinguo jiangong*)," "protecting interests of women and children and constructing safe families," "creating five-virtue families (*chuangjian wuhao wenming jiating*)," and

Working Group on Left-behind Children in Rural China. As an essential implementation entity, the ACWF lobbied and participated in many inspections of the implementation of minors-related policies organized by the NPC or the CPPCC. Although the ACWF covers a wide range of minor-related issues, it attaches more importance to three aspects—legal protection, family education, and caring for left-behind and migrant children.

Since the 1980s, the ACWF has participated in combating human trafficking by jointly issuing policy documents with other agencies and implementing these policies, such as rescuing and resettling abducted women and children. It not only contributed to formulating three National Action Plans against Human Trafficking but also formed a leading group to fulfill the responsibilities those plans assigned to it. In addition to policy formulation and implementation, the ACWF is active in agenda-setting regarding this issue. The ACWF submitted proposals via different channels to advocate a new system for comprehensive management of buyers' markets, which was adopted by the second and third national plans. Under this new policy, the ACWF insisted on eliminating the provision of exemption for buyers with certain benign behaviors when it participated in revising the Criminal Law and eventually succeeded in 2015 (Zhao et al. 2017, 336). Furthermore, the ACWF proposed a new temporary guardianship system for minors affected by human trafficking or violence, which was included in a policy document regarding guardians' infringements upon the rights of minors issued by the Supreme People's Court and three other authorities in 2014. Since 2016, it has strengthened the work of left-behind children to prevent human trafficking in this group.

The other battle is combatting sexual offenses against young female minors, defined as less than 14 years old in the Criminal Law. As mentioned in the case of the CWRW in Chapter Three,

“promoting the morality of little citizens and double qualifications for family education.”

this issue drew extensive social attention in May 2013 when a Hainan elementary school principal sexually offended female students in the school, and a few similar cases were exposed to the public after that. In the same month, the ACWF issued a statement to condemn these crimes and put forward a series of measures to prevent them. In September 2013, it issued a policy document to ACWF provincial branches to urge immediate actions to protect young female minors, and it also jointly issued a similar policy document with the MOE, the MOPS, and the CCYL.

It is worth mentioning that the ACWF joined the battle against “the crime of whoring with underage girls” stipulated in the Criminal Law⁷ and soon became an active advocate. It held two high-profile symposiums to discuss this issue in particular and the legal protection of minors in general in 2014. It submitted several proposals to the NPC and the CPPCC annual sessions in 2014 and 2015. In July 2015, the ACWF issued another statement to condemn such crimes. A more direct channel for the ACWF to affect the Criminal Law was its participation in the revision of the law. In August 2015, the NPC adopted the Amendment (IX) to the Criminal Law. The widely criticized “crime of whoring with underage girls” was abolished (Zhao et al. 2017, 336), and some other crimes, such as “crime of abuse” and “crime of organizing prostitution,” were also revised in the favorable direction of the ACWF.

In 2020, the ACWF, the CCYL, and seven other agencies jointly issued Opinions on Establishing a System for Compulsory Reporting of Cases Against Minors (for Trial Implementation), which requires institutions having close contact with minors to report suspicious cases against minors to the police. In the same year, the ACWF submitted proposals to the NPC regarding aggravated punishment of sex offenses against minors in enacting the Amendment (XI) to the Criminal Law and specific measures to prevent sexual harassment and assault on minors,

⁷ This chapter will discuss this in detail later.

including establishing relevant mechanisms in schools, in revising the Minors' Law. In October 2020, the NPC adopted the revised Minors' Law, which includes the system for compulsory reporting of cases against minors and school mechanisms for preventing sexual harassment and assault on minors. Two months later, the NPC adopted the Amendment (XI) to the Criminal Law, which includes aggravated punishment of sex offenses against minors and lists specific penalties.

The Anti-domestic Violence Law is another major policy achievement of the ACWF, in addition to the Women's Law. The ACWF played a critical role in developing this law (Wu 2021, 329).

The ACWF and the Anti-domestic Violence Law

As Chapter Two presents, the ACWF began to promote the enactment of the Anti-domestic Violence Law in 2008. That year, it lobbied six agencies and jointly issued Opinions on the Prevention and Suppression of Domestic Violence with them (Wu 2021, 329). After that, it submitted proposals to the NPC and the CPPCC annual sessions to enact the law (Qi et al. 2020, 385). In addition, it lobbied relevant committees in the NPC and the CPPCC to organize field investigations. It also conducted theoretical studies and field surveys to demonstrate the necessity and feasibility of such legislation. Li Yang's case of domestic violence emerged in September 2011⁸ and triggered intensive social discussions on the issue, which catalyzed the NPC's acceptance of the proposal (Wu 2021, 324-325). In 2012 and 2013, the Anti-domestic Violence Law was put on the NPC's list of preparatory legislation twice. The adjudication of Li Yang's case in February 2013 further facilitated the ACWF's successful lobbying of putting the law on the

⁸ Li Yang is a social celebrity in China as the inventor of Crazy English, a non-traditional method of learning English. His ex-wife, Kim Lee, exposed her sufferings of domestic violence from Li Yang in September 2011 and sued him at the Chaoyang District Court for divorce in October. Because a Chinese celebrity previously with a positive social image and his American wife were involved, the case drew extensive social attention and triggered widespread criticisms of Li Yang. In February 2013, the court adjudicated their divorce, and Li Yang had to pay a large amount of money to Kim Lee and their three daughters.

NPC's five-year legislative plan. As the principal drafter, the ACWF held numerous symposiums and conducted many field investigations to collect opinions from all sides (Wu 2021, 329). It also promoted social awareness of the issue and the law through multiple media outlets. In March 2015, the ACWF pushed the Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuratorate, the MOPS, and the MOJ to issue Opinions on Handling Criminal Cases of Domestic Violence in Accordance with Law, the first judicial document regarding criminal procedure for domestic violence cases (Wu 2021, 332). In September 2015, the ACWF and the MOCA jointly issued Guiding Opinions on Providing Shelter and Salvation to Victims of Domestic Violence. These policies were harbingers of the incoming law. After deliberations and soliciting public opinions by the Legal Affairs Office of the State Council and the NPC, the NPC adopted the Anti-domestic Violence Law on December 27, 2015. Known by the inclusion of a few new and practical measures, such as the discovery and report of domestic violence, restraining orders, and the salvation of victims, this law serves as the most critical legal base to prevent and deal with domestic violence, although the ACWF made some compromises in the formulation process (Zhao et al. 2017, 335; Qi et al. 2020, 389-390).

After the law took effect on March 1, 2016, the ACWF made great efforts to push forward its implementation. It launched a nationwide campaign to popularize the law, train relevant professionals, and establish local supporting institutions. It also pushed the Supreme People's Court to issue a judicial interpretation and urged local governments to enact supporting policy documents. Since 2017, the ACWF has joined an inter-ministerial joint meeting led by the Supreme People's Court to reform working mechanisms for family-related trials (Qi et al. 2020, 387). In 2017, Shen Yueyue, then chairwoman of the ACWF and vice chairwoman of the standing committee of the NPC, led a team, including officials of the NPC, to investigate the

implementation of the Anti-domestic Violence Law in Shandong Province. In 2018, the ACWF issued a policy document within its system to regulate internal procedures for managing domestic violence cases. In the following years, the ACWF urged the MOPS and other authorities to enact detailed measures regulating the management of domestic violence cases. In 2022, the ACWF and six other authorities, including the Supreme People's Court and the MOPS, jointly promulgated Opinions on Strengthening the Implementation of the Personal Safety Protective Order System.

Family education, the education minors receive from their parents/guardians, is an issue on which the ACWF has worked since the late 1970s. In the 1980s, the ACWF established Parents' Schools throughout the country. Since the 1990s, the ACWF has tried to incorporate it into national policies, such as Outlines of Chinese Children's Development, the Minors' Law, the National Outline of Medium and Long-term Educational Reform and Development (2010-2020), and China's Education Modernization 2035. Cooperating with other ministries/institutions such as the MOE, the ACWF had enacted six "five-year plans" for family education, the National Guiding Outline for Family Education, and other policy documents by 2022⁹. Based on numerous theoretical studies and field surveys¹⁰, the ACWF at all levels submitted many policy proposals to relevant authorities. In 2011, the ACWF and the MOE started nationwide field investigations of enacting a special law for family education and formed a comprehensive report and an experts' proposal draft. Since 2014, the ACWF consecutively submitted proposals to the NPC or the CPPCC for enacting the Family Education Promotion Law. In June 2013, the ACWF, the MOE, and the MOH jointly launched a pilot program in 20 selected locations in China to conduct

⁹ Examples include the Opinions on Further Strengthening the Work of Family Education, the Code of Conduct for Parents' Education, and the Opinions on Further Strengthening the Work of Parents' Schools.

¹⁰ The ACWF had conducted two rounds of nationwide surveys of family education by 2015.

experiments on establishing a guiding and serving system for family education. The program further enriched the ACWF's proposal to enact of such a law. In the meantime, the ACWF encouraged its local branches to advocate for local legislation. In 2016, Chongqing adopted Regulations on the Promotion of Family Education, the first local legislation in China. Guizhou, Shanxi, Jiangxi, Jiangsu, and several other provinces followed suit in the following years. In 2018, the ACWF proposed another draft of the Law to the NPC. In 2020, the ACWF successfully lobbied the NPC to include family education in the revisions of the Minors' Law and the Law on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency, which paved the way for putting the law on the NPC's legislative agenda. Based on the ACWF's draft, the NPC enacted the Family Education Promotion Law in 2020 and adopted it in October 2021. The law stipulates the responsibilities of parents/guardians, government sectors, and other relevant institutions. The MOE and the ACWF are authorized to establish the country's guiding and serving system for family education.

In rural China, migrant parents have left a large population of children behind. According to a research report released by the ACWF in May 2013¹¹, there were more than 61 million left-behind children (*liushou ertong*) in China, accounting for 37.7% of all rural children and 21.88% of all children living in China. Similar to and even worse than migrant children to cities, left-behind children suffer from insufficient care, education, and protection, which has caused a series of problems in their growth (Zhao et al. 2017, 334; Man et al. 2017, 197; Murphy, 2020).

In promoting family education, the ACWF provided services to left-behind children. In 2006, the State Council officially assigned caring for these children to the ACWF. As a response, the ACWF organized and led the Working Group on Left-behind Children in Rural China by recruiting 12 agencies/institutions. The following year, the working group launched a program

¹¹ Research Report on Left-behind Children in the Countryside and Migrant Children in Urban and Rural Areas, available at <http://acwf.people.com.cn/n/2013/0510/c99013-21437965.html>, accessed August 15, 2015.

called Sharing the Blue Sky: The Grand Activity of Caring Rural Left-behind and Migrant Children. In December 2011, the ACWF started another program with three Party-state agencies to conduct experiments on establishing a caring and serving system for rural left-behind and migrant children in 40 selected locations. In 2017, the ACWF launched an ad hoc action to care for rural left-behind children. These activities provided various services to these children: establishing custodial and family educational institutions, including activity centers; recruiting and training substitutive parents; and connecting schools, families, and communities. The ACWF established a dynamic monitoring system in those experimental locations and conducted field studies frequently. Based on these data, it submitted multiple policy proposals to the NPC and the CPPCC. When it participated in the revisions of the Minors' Law and the Compulsory Education Law, it successfully lobbied the NPC to include provisions protecting the rights of rural left-behind and migrant children. As the leading institution of the working group, the ACWF coordinated relevant agencies, such as the MOE, the MOH, the MOCA, and the MOPS, to issue policy documents benefiting left-behind and migrant children. For example, in January 2013, the MOE, the ACWF, and three other institutions jointly issued a policy document to strengthen compulsory education of left-behind children. In those experimental locations, local branches of the ACWF also pushed local agencies to carry out new policies assisting left-behind children, such as the reform of household registration, health care, social assistance, business startups of returning migrant workers and shared resources of compulsory education.

In 2016, the Inter-Ministerial Joint Meeting for Caring Rural Left-behind Children led by the MOCA replaced the Working Group on Left-behind Children in Rural China. In 2018, the responsibility of caring for children living in difficulties (*kunjing ertong*) due to poverty, disabilities, or lack of custody was added to the joint meeting. As a member of the joint meeting,

the ACWF assisted in drafting Opinions of the State Council on Strengthening the Work of Caring for Rural Left-behind Children and Opinions of the State Council on Strengthening the Work of Caring for Children Living in Difficulties, promulgated by the State Council in 2016. In 2019, the ACWF and five other agencies/ organizations jointly issued a guiding document to urge labor-intensive enterprises, which hire many migrant workers, to care for rural left-behind children and children living in difficulties. The same year, the ACWF and nine other agencies/organizations jointly promulgated another policy document to strengthen the caring and serving system for rural left-behind children and children living in difficulties.

The ACWF is not only an active policy advocate in the minors' field, but an important service provider. For example, using funds raised by affiliated foundations, the ACWF launched a series of renowned programs to help minors, including the Spring Buds Program supporting the education of girls in poverty, the Safe and Healthy Growth Project aiming to prevent minors from illnesses, injuries, crimes, and dropping out of school, and the National Action to Eliminate Infant Anemia; during the COVID-19 pandemic, the ACWF demanded local branches to rescue and protect children who lost guardians. Through these service programs, the ACWF has established connections with the grassroots and discovered issues it must resolve. Moreover, as shown in various cases presented above, the ACWF conducted field surveys and studies in almost all legislative processes in which it participated or tried to exert influence. From 2006 to 2010, all local ACWF branches conducted 11 thousand field investigations and studies pertaining to children's work and submitted more than four thousand policy proposals to local NPCs and CPPCCs, resulting in more than 300 new policy documents relevant to minors.¹² In 2014, the ACWF issued the ACWF Working System for Conducting Investigations and Studies as guidance.

¹² Five-year Review of the Department of Children's Work of the ACWF, available at <http://acwf.people.com.cn/n/2013/1018/c99013-23246933.html>, accessed October 4, 2015.

Like the CDPF, the ACWF has also established thousands of rights protection stations across the country and set up rights protection hotlines to provide legal aid and services to women and children. They serve as important channels for the ACWF to collect information from the grassroots. In 2014, the ACWF revised the Regulations on the Petitioning Work of Women's Federation, which creates some new petitioning mechanisms. In recent years, the ACWF started establishing a system to monitor and analyze public opinions reflected by the media, especially the internet media. In so doing, it can not only quickly respond to hot social events regarding women and children by uttering its voice and intervening in particular cases but also discover policy issues that deserve attention.

However, like its representation of women, the ACWF's representation of minors has limitations. In addition to its bureaucratic working style and overlong administrative chains, serving the state's interests is always one of the ACWF's primary goals, typically embodied by its role in ideological indoctrination. In 2002, the ACWF launched the Constructive Plan for Promoting the Morality of Little Citizens. In addition to the education of general ethics, the plan aims to imbue minors with the official ideology of the Party-state. Family education also involves this kind of indoctrination. For example, in the Family Education Promotion Law, essential principles of family education include cultivating and practicing Core Socialist Values and carrying forward the revolutionary culture. The first guideline is to educate minors to love the Communist Party and socialism. Under the general theme of "ideological and ethical construction for minors," the ACWF usually strengthens ideological indoctrination in the anniversaries of the CCP and the PRC or special events such as China's hosting of Olympic Games. Sometimes, the ACWF joined other authorities to fulfill ideological indoctrination. For example, in 2013, the ACWF joined the Cyberspace Administration, the MOE, and the CCYL to activate an action to

guide minors' surfing the internet in the way the Party-state favors. In minority regions, the ACWF propagandizes ethnic unity among minority minors. In recent years, it has expanded its influence in Hong Kong further. In an address made in July 2020, Shen Yueyue demanded that the ACWF must uphold women's organizations in Hong Kong and make them guide women and children in Hong Kong to support the Hong Kong national security law¹³, which was adopted by the NPC in that month and would seriously weaken Hong Kong's self-governance.

6.1.1.2 Policy Influence of the CCYL

Among all the mass organizations, the CCYL is a unique organization that undertakes the task of sustaining the rule of the Party-state by serving as "the CCP's assistant and reserve force," as stated in the first paragraph of the CCYL's constitution.¹⁴ In its history, the CCYL cultivated many political leaders, including several general secretaries of the Party and (vice) premiers of the government, and became a significant political force in some certain historical stages (Tsai and Liao 2021, 165-167). Overshadowed by this political function, representing the interests of its constituencies has always remained a function of secondary importance. Although the CCYL is an active state corporatist organization, its interest representation and policy influence have developed along a wavy path.

Before the Cultural Revolution, the CCYL concentrated on its political mission and served as a tool of the Party to control and mobilize the youth. After the Cultural Revolution, the reinstated CCYL realized the importance of serving the youth and conveying their voices to the Party (Doyon 2019, 40; Tsimonis 2021, 26-27, 61-62). In the addresses of its leaders, representing and protecting the interests of the youth appeared as a precondition to uniting and mobilizing them and a basis for strengthening the organization's status. The Thirteenth National Congress of the

¹³ See an ACWF news at http://www.women.org.cn/art/2020/7/11/art_17_164633.html, accessed October 22, 2020.

¹⁴ The CCYL's constitution was revised at its 18th National Congress in June 2018. This statement remains in the first paragraph.

CCP held in 1987 became a turning point, which confirmed that mass organizations should protect the specific interests of their respective constituencies. The Twelfth National Congress of the CCYL, held in 1988, brought forward for the first time that interest representation was one of its three social functions. In the same year, the CCYL issued a document to start systematic reform of the organization, aiming to represent the interests of the youth and influence relevant policies. From then on, some local branches established ad hoc departments of rights and interests, and some branches at the provincial level also set up hotlines and pushed for local legislation to protect minors.

The Tiananmen Square protests in 1989 temporarily interrupted this process. After the event, the CCP realized that it must strengthen the functions of mass organizations rather than weaken them to control the masses. In addition, it expected these organizations to serve as ordered means of interest expression for their assigned constituencies to avoid drastic street protests. At the end of 1989, The Central Committee of the CCP promulgated No. 12 document titled the Notice on Strengthening and Improving the Party's Leadership on the ACFTU, the CCYL, and the ACWF, in which these organizations are officially authorized to represent the interests of their respective constituencies and participate in relevant policymaking. Unlike the ACFTU and the ACWF, whose power of policy influence is further confirmed in the Trade Union Law and the Women's Law, respectively, this Party document is the only written authorization the CCYL has received from the Party-state. Between 1989 and 2006, the CCYL mainly participated in enacting the Minors' Law and the Law on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency, the two most critical national legislation in the minors' field. In 1993, the CCYL's central committee established the Department of Rights and Interests. However, except for these two laws, the CCYL was rarely involved in other policies. In this period, its "work of rights and interests" (*quanyi gongzuo*) focused on

providing various services to minors by conducting a series of featured projects, such as the Project Hope, Creating Outstanding Juvenile Rights Protection Posts, the 12355 Juvenile Hotline, and the For Tomorrow Project on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency. These projects reflected its efforts to implement the Minors' Law and the Law on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency.

In March 2007, Hu Jintao gave an important speech at a CPPCC meeting, which elaborated on the critical functions of mass organizations in constructing a harmonious society and emphasized interest representation and rights protection. This speech generalized the CCYL's functions into four dimensions—organizing, guiding, serving the youth, and protecting their legitimate interests. Driven by requirements from the top leadership, the CCYL promoted its work of rights and interests to a new level: it reorganized and strengthened the Department of Rights and Interests; it carried out a comprehensive Rights Protection Project for the Youth, which combined service, interest representation, and policy influence. The project also included a plan to influence the policy process of all relevant policies via various means the CCYL can employ; The CCYL participated in new legislation such as the Employment Promotion Law and the Mental Hygiene Law; it also started the Face to Face Activity in 2007, which brought together NPC representatives, CPPCC members, and youth representatives to discuss various policy issues.

However, it turned out that the relatively weak institutions and limited resources of the CCYL could hardly assume such comprehensive commitments. As a response, the CCYL leadership that succeeded in mid-2008 gradually cut the ambitious plan and concentrated on three missions—the Face to Face Activity, the prevention of juvenile delinquency, and the protection of minors. Xi Jinping, who replaced Hu Jintao in 2012, continued to require the CCYL to represent the interests of the youth. Under this pressure, the CCYL leadership coming to power in mid-2013 brought forward a “legalization, institutionalization, and socialization” guideline for the “work of

rights and interests.” According to this guideline, the CCYL made another ambitious plan to influence the whole policy process of all relevant policies at all administrative levels. In 2013, it conducted an extensive survey on protecting minors’ safe and healthy growth and activated a series of actions to promote their legal protection. However, it only achieved a part of these goals. Although the CCYL discovered systematic problems, it failed to advocate policy changes systematically. The planned Five-year Scheme for the Legal System of Minors’ Protection never occurred. In November 2013, the CCYL also launched a program in 45 selected cities to experiment on innovations in the “work of rights and interests.” Targeting nine directions, the program aimed to systematically promote the CCYL’s capacity and achievements of service provision, interest representation, and policy influence. However, the program’s effects were also limited, and it gradually faded out from the addresses of the CCYL leaders. After a concluding meeting held in October 2016, leaders of the CCYL no longer mentioned it. The two rounds of setbacks indicated that the relatively weak institutions and limited resources of the CCYL could not sustain systematic policy scrutinization and intensive policy-related actions. As a latecomer in the policy arena, its capacity to influence policies is relatively inferior to that of the ACWF and the ACFTU. Doyon (2019, 40-41; 2020, 781, 782-784) shows the limited managing capabilities of the CCYL in terms of financial resources, human resources, and coherence. For example, the CCYL’s 2015 budget was only 26.4% of the ACFTU’s.

In April 2017, the Central Committee of the CCP and the State Council released the Middle and Long-term Youth Development Plan (2016-2025)¹⁵, the first national plan regarding youth development in the history of the PRC. The plan comprises ten major fields, including the protection of rights and interests and the prevention of delinquencies/crimes, and ten major

¹⁵ In the plan, “youth” refers to those aged 14 to 35. This definition partially overlaps with that of “minors” in this research.

projects. It serves as a new guideline for China's youth development and the CCYL's work in a decade. Although the CCYL was the principal drafter of the plan, Xi Jinping initiated and directed it from the top.¹⁶ In addition to drafting the plan, the CCYL serves as the primary implementor and evaluator. According to the plan, an interdepartmental joint meeting, composed of 51 member institutions and coordinated by the CCYL, was formed to implement the plan. Furthermore, the plan requires all administrative areas at or above the county level to establish such a mechanism and enact local plans. Since the promulgation of the plan, the CCYL has conducted a few research projects and published six Reports on the Development of Youth in China (Blue Books of Youth Development) and two China Youth Development Statistical Yearbooks (2020 and 2021). In 2019, the CCYL established an expert committee to conduct policy research and monitor the plan's implementation. It also constructed youth development databases at the national and provincial levels. In 2020 and 2021, the CCYL advocated for including the implementation of the plan in the 14th national "five-year plan" and succeeded.

The two areas in which the CCYL has remarkable influence are the protection of minors and the prevention of juvenile delinquency. Its significant achievement in the former area was its participation in the whole policy process of the Minors' Law. In the latter domain, in addition to its involvement in the process of the Law on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency, the CCYL notably pushed forward the reform of the juvenile justice system. Both are good examples of its role as an active state corporatist organization. While Tsimonis (2021, 206-214) holds a view that the CCYL has been integrated into the policymaking system as a junior partner with limited

¹⁶ Qin Yizhi, former First Secretary of the CCYL Central Secretariat, accentuated this at a press conference regarding the promulgation of the plan held on May 17, 2017. The text of the conference is available at http://qnzz.youth.cn/gzdt/201705/t20170518_9803135.htm, accessed November 17, 2018. He Junke, the succeeding First Secretary of the CCYL Central Secretariat, also mentioned this when he presented a work report at the CCYL's 18th National Congress in June 2018. The report is available at http://news.youth.cn/wztt/201807/t20180704_11659708.htm, accessed November 17, 2018.

capacity to influence youth policies, he admits the League's greatest potential for responsiveness is in the field of children's and adolescents' affairs.

The CCYL and the Minors' Law

The CCYL's significant achievement in the domain of minors' protection has been its participation in the whole policy process of the Minors' Law. As early as 1980, the CCYL initiated and drafted the Regulation on the Protection of Minors but failed to push it forward consistently at the national level. Instead, a few provinces enacted local legislation to protect minors. In 1987, the CCYL resumed the drafting process with the former State Education Commission and continued to participate in the formulation of the law until its adoption in 1991. After that, the CCYL's local branches facilitated enacting and revising the Implementation Measures of the Minors' Law or equivalent local legislation in 31 province-level administrative regions. To implement the Minors' Law, the CCYL launched multiple projects, such as Creating Outstanding Juvenile Rights Protection Posts, to protect minors' interests. According to the law, Committees for the Protection of Minors, interdepartmental institutions for coordination, were established at different administrative levels, and most of their offices resided in the CCYL's branches at the same levels. However, as multiple leaders of the CCYL acknowledged, these committees underperformed and needed more activation.¹⁷ Also, local committees did not have a central coordinator at the national level.

As China's market reforms proceeded in the 1990s, new problems regarding minors arose, such as the emergence of the massive population of migrant children and left-behind children, the

¹⁷ See the address of Wang Hongyan at the CCYL's symposium on the work of rights and interests on August 28, 2013 and the address of Qin Yizhi at the CCYL's symposium on the Face to Face Activity on February 24, 2014. They are available at http://www.gqt.org.cn/documents/ccylspeech/201309/t20130923_658695.htm and http://www.gqt.org.cn/documents/ccylspeech/201403/t20140327_684713.htm, respectively, accessed March 15, 2016.

appearance of minors' internet addiction, and more juvenile delinquencies. As a result of its participation in the NPC's implementation inspections of the law and echoing appeals of many NPC representatives, CPPCC members, and experts, the CCYL submitted a report to the NPC to propose a revision of the law in 2003. In the same year, the NPC put the revision of the law on its legislative agenda and designated the CCYL as the drafter of the revisions. The CCYL conducted substantive research and held numerous meetings in multiple locations. After submitting the first draft in 2005, the NPC took over and continued inviting the CCYL to participate in the drafting process. In December 2006, the NPC adopted the revised law¹⁸, which covers many problems, incorporates that content of the CRC and some new Chinese legislation, and strengthens its applicability in practice. After that, the CCYL pushed for revisions of local legislation based on the revised law through its local branches. To implement the law, the CCYL launched the Action to Protect Minors with 19 ministries/institutions in 2007. It also continued participating in the NPC's implementation inspections of the law and other agencies' law-enforcement campaigns.

After a decade, new issues, such as sexual offenses against minors, school bullying, and incompetent guardianship, arose again. In cooperation with other organizations and experts, the CCYL called for another revision of the Minor's Law and put it on the NPC's agenda. Although the NPC led the drafting process from the outset this time, the CCYL actively participated in the process as a member of the drafting group and submitted many proposals. The NPC adopted the revised law in October 2020. As mentioned before, it includes the system for compulsory reporting of cases against minors and school mechanisms for preventing sexual assaults and bullying. It also lists guardians' responsibilities and prohibited conduct and establishes a system to check the criminal records of persons who may have close contact with minors. In addition, the

¹⁸ The NPC passed another minor revision of the Minors' Law in October 2012 to make it consistent with the revised Criminal Procedure Law.

procuratorates acquire the power to file public interest litigations.

To effectively implement the revised Minors' Law, the State Council formed an inter-ministerial institution, Leading Group for the Work of Minors' Protection, led by a vice premier in April 2021. The executive office of the group resides in the MOCA, and the minister of the MOCA was appointed its director. Eight deputy directors include one secretary of the CCYL Central Secretariat and one vice chairwoman of the ACWF. After that, such leading groups were established at all administrative levels, with their offices in the MOCA branches at the same levels. Consequently, these groups replaced Committees for the Protection of Minors, and the MOCA system has taken the lead in the protection of minors.

The CCYL and the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency

In addition to the Minors' Law, the CCYL participated in the whole policy process of the Law on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency. After the adoption of the Minors' Law in 1991, the CCYL became increasingly involved in assisting and educating juvenile delinquents. In the meantime, it joined many NPC representatives, CPPCC members, and experts to advocate for national legislation. In 1994, the NPC put it in its five-year legislative plan and formed a drafting group with the CCYL. The group conducted numerous investigations and symposiums and revised the draft multiple times in the following years. In June 1999, the NPC adopted the Law on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency. However, the law gradually became outdated and inapplicable in practice thanks to China's rapid social changes in the new century (Zhao et al. 2017, 333). The CCYL realized the problem in implementing the law and submitted a proposal to the NPC to revise it in 2013. After that, it conducted further investigations and surveys and shared results with

relevant authorities.¹⁹ In 2018, the NPC put the revision on its legislative agenda. The CCYL participated in the drafting process again and brought forward many proposals, such as strengthening reform schools (*zhuanmen xuexiao*). At the end of 2020, the NPC adopted the revised law. The law classifies juvenile delinquency into three categories—delinquencies, serious delinquencies, and crimes. It specifies the responsibilities and measures different parties, such as families, schools, communities, and judicial sectors, need to take to prevent and correct each delinquency category. Strengthening reform schools becomes a critical step in dealing with serious delinquencies.

After the first passage of the law in 1999, the CCP attached more importance to the issue of juvenile delinquency and decided to incorporate it into the comprehensive management of public security. In 2001, the Leading Group on the Work of Preventing Juvenile Delinquency was established under the Central Commission for Comprehensive Management of Public Security²⁰, with its office in the CCYL. Since then, similar groups have been established at or above the county level throughout the country. This leading group was renamed the Special Group of Preventing Juvenile Delinquency in 2011, and its member institutions were enlarged to 21, compared with the original 13. The CCYL still serves as the coordinating institution of the group. In contrast to the system of Committees for the Protection of Minors, this interdepartmental institution has become an essential platform for the CCYL to perform its policy functions.

To implement the Law on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency, the CCYL coordinated member institutions and launched multiple projects to provide services to minors. For example,

¹⁹ In fact, the NPC revised one article of the Law on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency in October 2012 to make it consistent with the revised Criminal Procedure Law. However, what the CCYL pursued was a significant revision of the law.

²⁰ Established in 1991 and attached to the Central Committee of the CCP, the commission assists the Party and the State Council in matters concerning law enforcement and social management. Its chairman is usually also a member of the Politburo and the secretary of the Central Politics and Law Commission, which is also affiliated with the Central Committee of the CCP and takes charge of the Chinese legal system.

they started the aforementioned For Tomorrow Project on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency in 2004 and have conducted two experimental projects since 2010 to serve critical juvenile groups²¹ and to create “communities/villages with zero juvenile delinquency and victim.” In addition to providing services, the CCYL pushed member institutions to enact new policies or revise existing policies in the area. For instance, the MOCA promulgated three policies in 2006 to assist wandering minors. In 2016, for another instance, the CCYL and eight other agencies/institutions jointly issued a policy document for preventing and managing school bullying. In recent years, the CCYL has made great efforts to introduce social work into the protection of minors and the prevention of juvenile delinquency (Deng 2020, 63).

Most importantly, the CCYL has pushed forward the juvenile justice system reform using the platform. Before the founding of the leading group, China’s juvenile justice system remained incomplete and fragmented, and relevant legal proceedings and norms were also outdated. To integrate relevant authorities, the CCYL established a joint conference mechanism with major judicial organs in the leading group, including the Central Commission for Comprehensive Management of Public Security, the Supreme People’s Court, the Supreme People’s Procuratorate, the MOPS, and the MOJ. It also conducted extensive field investigations and research, including relevant norms, institutions, and practices in developed countries, and shared results with authorities in the joint conference. After several years, they agreed on reforming China’s juvenile justice system. In 2010, these six institutions jointly issued Opinions on Further Establishing and Improving a Coordinated Work System for Handling Criminal Cases Involving Minors, introducing many institutional innovations and specifying interlinked and collaborative operations between different judicial organs. In the same year, the Supreme People’s Court enacted Opinions

²¹ The five critical juvenile groups are idle juveniles, juvenile delinquents, wandering and begging juveniles, minor children of incarcerated parents, and rural left-behind children.

on Further Strengthening the Work of Juvenile Court, while the MOJ issued policy documents to improve legal aid to critical juvenile groups. From 2012 to 2016, the Supreme People's Procuratorate also promulgated new policies or revised existing ones to enhance criminal procuratorial work related to minors. The CCYL achieved another milestone when it participated in revising the Criminal Procedure Law. Adopted in 2012, the new law, for the first time, includes an ad hoc chapter stipulating the judicial proceedings for juvenile criminal cases, which explicitly prescribes the guidelines, principles, and special procedures in dealing with such cases and reaffirms innovations in the 2010 policy document. Accordingly, the Supreme People's Court issued a judicial interpretation on applying the new Criminal Procedure Law in 2013. In 2016-2017, the special group successfully pushed for adjustments to the guardianship system for minors in the General Rules of the Civil Law. In 2019, the CCYL participated in enacting the Community Correction Law, which also includes an ad hoc chapter stipulating special measures for minors. The following year, it submitted proposals for the Amendment (XI) to the Criminal Law, which lowers the minimum age of criminal responsibility. In 2021 and 2022, the Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuratorate, and other relevant authorities issued multiple policy documents to implement the revised Minors' Law and the Law on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency, such as Opinions on Strengthening the Trial of Cases involving Minors in the New Era, Implementation Measures for the Sealing of Juvenile Criminal Records, Opinions on Implementing the Employment Prohibition System, and Provisions on the Protection of Minors by Schools. By 2022, there had been 2,181 juvenile courts throughout the country.²² Thus, a much enriched, updated, and coordinated juvenile justice system arose.

²² See an online Supreme People's Court news report at <https://www.court.gov.cn/fabu-xiangqing-371901.html>, accessed April 28, 2023.

Regarding interest representation, the CCYL actively articulates the opinions of its constituencies and tries to influence policies based on these opinions. In addition to surveys and investigations in legislative processes, it launched two large-scale field investigations in 2007 and 2015-2016 in response to requirements from top Party-state leadership. From 2005 to 2022, the CCYL conducted eight nationwide surveys on youths' internet usage, which facilitated the Cyberspace Administration to draft Provisions on the Cyber Protection of Children's Personal Information and Regulations on the Protection of Minors on the Internet.

Unlike other mass organizations, however, the CCYL's interest representation is largely integrated into its featured projects or activities. Since 1998, the CCYL and the Central Commission for Comprehensive Management of Public Security have started Creating Outstanding Juvenile Rights Protection Posts across the country. They recognize and reward outstanding grassroots units that deal with various rights-related youth affairs. Through this activity, multiple institutions have built a network collecting and transferring firsthand information in daily. Based on those hotlines created by local branches, the CCYL activated the 12355 Juvenile Hotline throughout the country in 2006, which provides legal, psychological, and other services to the youth. The CCYL designed and applied statistical software to collect and analyze data generated from the hotline services dynamically. In so doing, the CCYL monitors the status of the youth, finds out their demands, and discovers the most popular issues that should be addressed. Since 2000, the CCYL has launched ten projects or campaigns to assist minors in abstaining from internet addiction, guide their behaviors in cyberspace, encourage the development and application of new technologies, and establish the CCYL's websites and apps. The CCYL excels in utilizing new media, including instant messaging systems, blogs and microblogs, mobile apps, and webcasts, to interact with constituencies and collect information conveniently. In 2015, the CCYL

established a comprehensive online platform called “Voices of the Youth,”²³ on which youths can directly interact with CCYL leaders and experts in various professions. Sometimes, the CCYL used this platform to solicit youths’ opinions/suggestions for the annual NPC and CPPCC sessions and the enactment of national plans (Liu and Chen, 2023). As mentioned, the CCYL started the Face to Face Activity in 2007 and promoted it to another featured activity. Each year, after the CCYL determines one central theme for the activity, it requires all local branches above the prefectural level to conduct investigations and studies of the theme and to listen to relevant opinions/demands of the youth via various means. Articulating and analyzing these opinions/demands, they form research reports and policy proposals, based on which they hold symposiums with local People’s Congress representatives and CPPCC members within the CCYL and the All-China Youth Federation²⁴ systems. With the CCYL’s facilitation, they submit official proposals at annual sessions of the CPPCC and the People’s Congress. Synthesizing local achievements, the Central Committee of the CCYL follows the same procedure at the national level. After the submissions, the CCYL tracks the progress of those proposals and urges the CPPCC, People’s Congress, and relevant government agencies to deal with the issues raised in those proposals.

Generally speaking, the CCYL’s mode of policy influence is active state corporatism. However, its limitations are more severe than similar organizations in this category. Its bureaucratization and limited youth representation have been a long-standing problem (Ngai et al. 2001, 663). In July 2015, when the CCP held its first Working Conference of Mass Organizations, Xi Jinping pointed out that mass organizations are bureaucratic (*guanlianhua*), administrative

²³ Its homepage is <http://qnzs.youth.cn>.

²⁴ The All-China Youth Federation is an organization led by the CCYL, which also has guaranteed memberships in the CPPCC. The CCYL also guides the All-China Students’ Federation. Because these two organizations generally are not composed of minors and do not serve minors, this research excludes them.

(*xingzhenghua*), aristocratic (*guizuhua*), and entertainment-oriented (*yulehua*), and indicated the CCYL was even worse in terms of the latter two (Tsai and Liao 2021, 170).²⁵ In February 2016, the CCYL received highly negative feedback from a central inspection group dispatched by the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection of the CCP and the Organization Department of the CCP Central Committee (Doyon 2019, 43; Doyon 2020, 783; Tsimonis 2021, 245). In August 2016, the General Office of the CCP Central Committee promulgated the CCYL Central Committee Reform Scheme, which launched a major reform of the CCYL's organization, personnel, and working mode. As Doyon (2019, 43-44; 2020, 794-795) and Tsimonis (2021, 245-247) point out, the reform has further decreased the CCYL's resources and strengthened the CCP's control over it. In early 2020, another central inspection group pointed out that bureaucratic and administrative trends still existed in the CCYL although it had improved to some extent.²⁶

Furthermore, almost all projects/activities of the CCYL, including those for the protection of rights and interests, have the ultimate goal of sustaining the rule of the Party-state. The CCYL also plays a vital role in ideological indoctrination, which is the core of organizing and guiding the youth. The Chinese Young Pioneers Working Committee serves as a typical example. It is an internal organ of the CCYL and takes charge of the Chinese Young Pioneers, a subordinate organization of the CCYL that enrolls most children between six and fourteen years old in China. Unlike other organs of the CCYL that have service or policy functions, however, the Chinese Young Pioneers is an entity for ideological indoctrination, i.e., almost all its activities concentrated on this function so that it provided few services to children and never tried to represent their interests and influence relevant policies. In 2017, the CCYL launched the reform of the Chinese

²⁵ See Li Yuanchao's address at the Fifth Plenum of the 17th CCYL Central Committee on January 15, 2016, available at <http://www.gqt.org.cn/documents/zqf>, accessed April 19, 2016.

²⁶ See CCYL news at http://qnzz.youth.cn/qckc/202001/t20200110_12166512.htm, accessed October 31, 2020.

Young Pioneers and listed representing the interests of children and participating in enacting relevant policies in the reform plan. In the same year, it included the Chinese Young Pioneers Working Committee in the Warming Hearts project to serve left-behind children. However, in a speech in 2018, He Junke, the First Secretary of the CCYL Central Secretariat since June 2018, still pointed out that serving children is the weakest part of the work of Chinese Young Pioneers.²⁷ In a work report for the 8th National Congress of the Chinese Young Pioneers held in July 2020, Wu Gang, director of the Chinese Young Pioneers Working Committee, confirmed political enlightenment and shaping values were major responsibilities of the organization while he only briefly mentioned serving minors and influencing policies without any examples or plans.²⁸ In January 2021, the Central Committee of the CCP promulgated Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening the Work of the Chinese Young Pioneers in the New Era, which accentuates the Communist Party's leadership in addition to reiterating key points of Wu Gang's work report.²⁹ In the following years, the Chinese Young Pioneers did not take any actions to influence minors-related policies.³⁰

The CCYL's involvement in new media is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it is a means of interest representation. On the other hand, it has become a modern way of ideological surveillance and indoctrination (Liu and Chen, 2023). In cooperation with other authorities, such as the Cyberspace Administration, the CCYL launched many activities to regulate the youth's internet use and utilize the youth to control public opinions in cyberspace. The CCYL has enrolled millions of volunteers to build a "network legion" in fighting online ideological battles against any thoughts different from the official ideology (Han, 2015).³¹ To facilitate this work, the CCYL

²⁷ The text of the speech is available at <http://www.gqt.org.cn/notice/>, accessed November 21, 2018.

²⁸ The text of the report is available at http://qnzz.youth.cn/qkcc/202007/t20200727_12425643.htm, accessed October 30, 2020.

²⁹ The document is available at http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/2021-02/03/content_5584656.htm, accessed April 27, 2023.

³⁰ See its 2021 and 2022 annual reports at <https://zgsxd.k618.cn/wjk/2021/zsf/>, accessed April 28, 2023.

³¹ According to the work report for the CCYL's 18th National Congress presented by He Junke, the CCYL had mobilized ten

established the China Youth Internet Think Tank in 2015, which recruited at least 40 renowned experts in various realms.

As mentioned at the beginning of this subsection, the CCYL is China's most politicized mass organization that serves as the CCP's assistant and reserve force. CCYL cadres will usually transform into formal officials of the Party-state after their tenure with the CCYL ends (Doyon, 2017; Doyon 2020, 781; Ma 2023, 488, 504). Consequently, its leadership may lack long-term intentions and plans to protect minors' interests; therefore, interest representation remains a function of secondary importance for the CCYL. As Tsimonis (2021, 69) points out, the fast turnaround of cadres reduces the incentive for developing youth specialization in the long run and initiating pro-youth activities and programs. Compared with other active state corporatist organizations, the CCYL's efforts to influence policies may be less effective and consistent, as is evident from the wavy path the CCYL has walked along. Quite a few objectives to influence policies stated in its annual work plans turned out to be unfruitful and missing in its work reviews. In 2007 and 2013, two different leaders of the CCYL made comprehensive plans and carried out ambitious projects to represent the interests of the youth and influence policies. Nonetheless, both actions soon faded out. Its relatively weak institutions and insufficient resources in interest representation and policy influence could not sustain such comprehensive projects. In the same vein, the MOCA eventually took over its leading role in the system of Committees for the Protection of Minors. Tsimonis (2021, 32-33, 64-70, 237-242) puts forward a notion of "juniority," characterized by political and generational subordination to senior stakeholders in politics and society, to explain the CCYL's inherent limitation to engage young people in a meaningful and

million "youth internet civilization volunteers" (*qingnian wangluo wenming zhiyuanzhe*) to fight online battles against "erroneous remarks and phenomena." The report is available at http://news.youth.cn/wzt/201807/t20180704_11659708.htm, accessed November 17, 2018.

responsive way. Even worse, as mentioned above, the CCYL's capabilities have been further weakened in the Xi Jinping era. Tsai and Liao (2021, 169-175) note that the reform of the CCYL launched by Xi blocked its cadres' path to promotion within the Party and government system. Doyon (2020) also argues that Xi Jinping has, in fact, been working towards weakening CCYL cadres' route to Party-state leadership so that potential rivals cannot use it. Tsimonis (2021, 38, 247-248) points out that the drastic reduction of support and mass demotion of League cadres will have a negative impact on the CCYL's capacity and responsiveness, as it will return to the traditional task of indoctrination and mobilization, which has in the past alienated the youth.

6.1.1.3 Policy Influence of Other Top-down Social Organizations for Minors

In the field of minors, other top-down social organizations exist either inside or outside the ACWF and the CCYL systems. Like the women's field, the ACWF and the CCYL have empowered a few affiliated organizations to actively participate in the whole policy process, making them a part of their active state corporatism. Except for these organizations, most other organizations fall into the category of passive state corporatism.

Founded in 1982 and affiliated initially with the CASS, the Chinese Society for Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Research (CSJDPR) transferred to the CCYL system in 2004. It is the first and the most prominent think tank in the domain of juvenile delinquency. Since its inception, the CSJDPR has conducted numerous research projects and held or participated in many symposiums, resulting in many books, journal articles, and research reports. More importantly, it assumed some responsibilities of the Special Group Office of Preventing Juvenile Delinquency³², strengthening its status in the policy process. The CSJDPR participated in almost all legislation in minors' protection and the prevention of juvenile delinquency, such as the Minors' Law, the Law

³² See its self-introduction at <http://www.zgyfw.org.cn/guanyuwomen/2023/0207/140.html>, accessed April 30, 2023.

on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency, and crucial policies supporting the construction and improvement of the juvenile justice system, and its experts exerted significant influence in the process. The CSJDPR proposed many policy innovations, including eliminating criminal records, sentencing recommendations for minors, and legal proceedings in juvenile courts. Furthermore, it was involved in not only agenda setting, policy formulation and evaluation, but policy implementation. For example, it took part in the comprehensive management of public security by providing legal aid and education, and it also provided services to critical juvenile groups. The CSJDPR has built strong connections with grassroots institutions dealing with juvenile delinquency and named some of them “research base of juvenile delinquency” since 2010, through which it regularly collects relevant information for research. Since 2009, the CSJDPR has conducted nationwide sample surveys in juvenile correctional facilities/reform schools every two years to collect firsthand data. In 2022, the Supreme People’s Court took over the CSJDPR as its new supervisory body. Provided that the Supreme People’s Court is a formal and more powerful state organ than the CCYL, the CSJDPR may play a more critical role in the policy process. However, this transfer will further weaken the CCYL’s policy capacities.

The China Youth & Children Research Center (CYCRC) and its extension, the China Youth & Children Research Association³³, are a more comprehensive think tank within the CCYL that researches many aspects of the youth and “the work of the youth,” including the protection of minors and the prevention of juvenile delinquency (Tsimonis 2021, 207-208). Like the CSJDPR, the CYCRC is also an organization with fruitful publications, including many policy proposals. From 2003 to 2009, for example, the CYCRC released 118 monographic reports on various

³³ The CYCRC was established in 1991, while the China Youth & Children Research Association was established in 1999, with its management office in the CYCRC. Their relationship is like that of the WSIC and the Chinese Women’s Research Society in the women’s field or that of the Research Office of the CDPF and the CDRS in the field of disability. The best description of this practice is “one organ, two signs.”

theoretical and practical issues. It also edits a non-circulating publication called Youth Internal Reference and submits each issue to relevant Party-state institutions. The CYCRC is the primary institution to edit Blue Books of Youth Development and similar reports. It actively participated in managing critical juvenile groups and revising the Minors' Law and the Law on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency. From 2005 to 2022, the CYCRC held 18 China Youth & Children Development Forum. These forums generated many research articles and created a platform for grassroots and official institutions to communicate with each other. The CYCRC also runs an online survey system through which the CCYL and other institutions monitor the youth's status quo and promptly collect first-hand data. For example, in 2019, the CYCRC conducted a nationwide survey of minors' behaviors in playing video games using the system.

The China Family Education Society (CFES) is a vital think tank researching family education within the ACWF system. The ACWF has established similar research organizations in all province-level administrative regions and most counties. As the first and most prominent social organization in this domain, it has established a theoretical system of family education and conducted substantial research on practical and policy-related issues. From 2004 to 2008, relying on the CFES, the ACWF at all administrative levels conducted more than 1,700 investigations/studies on family education and submitted more than 2,000 policy proposals to relevant authorities.³⁴ The CFES participated in almost all the ACWF's policy activities regarding family education and exerted much influence. For example, it actively participated in the agenda setting, formulation, implementation, and evaluation of all "five-year plans" for family education, and it also played an essential role in forming the proposal draft of the Family Education Promotion

³⁴ See Meng Xiaosi. 2008. Further Promoting Ideological and Ethical Construction for Minors. *Work Brief of Ideological and Ethical Construction for Minors*, issue 34, available at http://archive.wenming.cn/gzyd/2009-01/22/content_15530096.htm, accessed October 15, 2015.

Law. Experts of the CFES facilitated many of the ACWF's proposals submitted to the NPC and the CPPCC. In addition, the CFES provides relevant services and supports establishing the guiding and serving system for family education, such as conducting educational projects throughout the country and running Online Parents' Schools. Since 2019, the CFES has drafted a few industrial standards for family education, such as the first national standard for family education service institutions and vocational standard for parenting instructors.³⁵

Founded in 1982, the China National Children's Center (CNCC) was a service-oriented institution undertaking out-of-school education for much of its history. It also conducts applied science research on children's development. In 2011, the ACWF set up the Family Education Research and Instructing Center in the CNCC, which receives directions from the ACWF and the CFES. In addition to conducting extensive research, including a large-scale nationwide survey from 2012 to 2016, the CNCC participated in the ACWF's policymaking in the field of family education, such as the enactment and evaluation of three "five-year plans" for family education (2011-2015, 2016-2020, 2021-2025).³⁶ In addition, it provides relevant services, such as family education consultation and legal education, to individual families. In so doing, the CNCC's policy function has been strengthened. Furthermore, some of its family education research projects involved minors' rights protection, which paved the way for a new research direction. In 2015, it supported research on the rights of children with rare disorders. In 2017, it published China's first blue book of children titled Report on Children's Participation in China (2017). By 2022, it had published five blue books on Chinese children's development, which include many policy proposals. In 2018, the CNCC promulgated Ten Big Events regarding the Rights of Children in

³⁵ Its annual reports and work review are available at <https://www.zgjxh.org.cn>, accessed April 30, 2023.

³⁶ See the work review of the Family Education Research and Instructing Center, available at <https://www.ccc.org.cn/col/col50/index.html>, accessed December 4, 2018.

2018, Hot Topics of Children's Rights in the Last Five Years, and Suggestions of Development Priorities in Children's Charity. From 2019 to 2021, it conducted big data research on public sentiment concerning hot topics of children. In 2019, the CNCC initiated the annual China Children Development Forum. These forums covered many minor-related policy issues and created platforms for grassroots institutions to communicate with various official organs. Since 2011, the CNCC has grown from a passive policy implementor into a vital think tank in family education and children's development and has become a critical supporting organization for the ACWF's "children's work." In 2022, when the CNCC celebrated its 40th anniversary, Xi Jinping sent a congratulatory letter, which expected the CNCC to serve as a protector of children's rights and interests.³⁷

However, the ACWF and the CCYL do not bestow all affiliated organizations with such policy functions. Some are only assigned the responsibility of implementing specific policies and, therefore, fall into the category of passive state corporatism. One organization under the ACWF has even languished and fallen into the category of symbolic state corporatism.

The China Youth Association for Network Development renamed the China Youth New Media Association in 2013, is an organization that implements internet policies and facilitates the CCYL's projects or campaigns regarding the internet and the youth, including ideological indoctrination and supporting the "network legion." It has made few policy proposals and generally is not involved in relevant policy actions of the CCYL. For example, instead of this association, the CCYL assigned its Department of Rights and Interests to draft Regulations on the Protection of Minors on the Internet.

Integrating China Youth Development Service Center, Chinese Young Pioneers Business

³⁷ The letter is available at http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2022-05/31/content_5693240.htm, accessed April 30, 2023.

Development Center, and China National Youth Palace Association in 2017, the China Teenagers & Children Development Service Center under the CCYL is a service-oriented organization promoting the essential-qualities-oriented education (*suzhi jiaoyu*), extracurricular practical activities (*xiaowai shijian huodong*), and foreign exchange. Neither this new organization nor the three organizations it incorporated have records of influencing policies regarding minors.

The China Youth Development Foundation (CYDF) under the CCYL manages the famous Project Hope, which funds primary education and relevant facilities in underdeveloped regions, and a few other projects, such as an environmental project called Beautiful China—Green Project Hope and Xiaoping Fund projects promoting scientific and technological innovations in youth. However, focusing on providing services, this star organization is not an active participant in policymaking. According to Huang Lijing, director of two internal departments of the CYDF, the CYDF even hardly had much influence at policy meetings regarding Project Hope primary schools held by the MOE; the environmental project neither included any activities aiming at influencing environmental policies.³⁸ In 2014-2015, the CYDF conducted four surveys of left-behind children, migrant workers of the new generation, rural teachers, and mini-village schools and published research reports. In 2014, it brought forward proposals regarding the draft of the Charity Law.³⁹ However, these policy actions turned out to be ephemeral. In the following years, it stopped engaging in such activities.⁴⁰ Focusing on its service provision, researchers emphasize the social impact of the CYDF and its mutually beneficial relationship with the CCYL (Hsu, 2008; Lu, 2009; Hsu, 2016; Hsu 2017, 66-121; Doyon, 2019; Tsimonis, 218-220). Nonetheless, its onefold policy function as an implementor remains unnoticed.

³⁸ The author's interview with Huang Lijing, director of the Integrated Information Department and Environmental Protection Department of the CYDF, on June 11, 2012, in Beijing.

³⁹ See the 2014 and 2015 annual reports of the CYDF, available at <http://www.cydf.org.cn/niandubaogao/>, accessed Dec. 3, 2018.

⁴⁰ A search of its annual reports from 2016 to 2021 and reports of organizational activities up to April 2023 on its official website at <https://www.cydf.org.cn> showed no record of policy actions.

Similarly, in the ACWF system, the China Children and Teenagers' Fund raises funds to support the ACWF's provision of services, including the Spring Buds Program, Safe and Healthy Growth Project, caring for left-behind children and children living in difficulties, and Online Parents' Schools. It is not involved in other policy activities. Although it released a few research reports, they aimed to improve its service projects rather than advocating for policies.⁴¹

Local children's centers and women's activity centers formed the All-China Women and Children Development Association in 2009. It aims to enhance the cooperation between these centers and their external contacts through learning, training, and communication activities. After its 2015 annual conference, there have been no more updated activities. It has generally become a dormant organization in the ACWF system, albeit it has never been closed. This association falls into the category of symbolic state corporatism.

In the minors' field, there are a few social organizations affiliated with government agencies other than these two mass organizations. The China Education Development Foundation under the MOE raises funds to support education in poverty-stricken areas of the country. The Donation Center of the Railway Youth Development, affiliated with the former Ministry of Railways and the current China Railway Corporation, also funds education inside or outside the railway system. The China Charities Aid Foundation for Children, affiliated with the MOCA, raises funds to help left-behind children and children living in difficulties, such as orphans or de facto unsupported children, disabled children, and wandering minors. The China Association for SOS Children's Villages, affiliated with the MOCA, cooperates with the SOS Children's Villages International to build and manage SOS children's villages in China that foster orphans. Under the same ministry, the Bridge of Love Adoption Service specializes in providing various

⁴¹ These reports are available at <https://www.cctf.org.cn/report/study>, accessed April 30, 2023.

services for the international adoption of Chinese children. All these organizations focus on providing services and implementing relevant policies within their respective supervisory agencies while they do not participate in other policy activities.

Founded in 1990, a year after the Tiananmen Square protests, the China National Committee on Care for Children (CNCCC) organizes accomplished retired persons who are loyal to the Party, mainly former cadres, soldiers, specialists, teachers, and recognized exemplary persons, to educate and care for the youth. By the end of 2018, it had established 1.07 million local branches at every administrative level and enrolled 13.67 million volunteers.⁴² The primary goal of this organization is to indoctrinate the youth with official ideologies, as has been stressed in its constitution and all its work plans/reviews and addresses of major organizational leaders. It also participates in social management and provides services to the youth. For example, as a member of the Special Group of Preventing Juvenile Delinquency led by the CCYL, the CNCCC undertakes legal education, overseeing internet bars, correction of juvenile delinquents, and community mediation; it also facilitates the ACWF to promote family education and care for left-behind children and children living in difficulties; in addition, the CNCCC provides science and technology education and raises funds to conduct various service programs.

The CNCCC is a quasi-mass organization that has a part of the structure and functions of mass organizations but lacks the status of mass organizations. It is not one of the 22 mass organizations managed by the State Commission for Public Sector Reform, as introduced in Chapter One. Instead, it is officially affiliated with the National Government Offices Administration, another agency subordinated to the State Council. Unlike the ACWF and the CCYL, the Party-state does not grant the CNCCC the status of representing minors and the power

⁴² See a report of Xinhua News Agency regarding the work of the CNCCC in 2018, available at http://m.xinhuanet.com/2019-01/14/c_1123988593.htm, accessed April 30, 2023.

to participate in the whole policy process. The primary function of this organization is to implement minors-related policies. The revised Minors' Law and the Law on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency require social organizations, including the CNCCC, to facilitate the government to implement these laws. In 2022, the General Office of the CCP Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council promulgated Opinions on Strengthening the Work of the China National Committee on Care for Children in the New Era as new guidance for the CNCCC. This document requires the CNCCC to perform duties stipulated in the Minors' Law and the Law on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency. None of these three documents mentions that the CNCCC's opinions should be considered when the government enacts minors-related policies.

In practice, it seldom participated in agenda setting and policy evaluation and has brought forward few policy initiatives. Sometimes, other policymaking entities invited the CNCCC to formulate specific policies, but it usually played a minor role in the process. For example, the ACWF invited the CNCCC to formulate "five-year plans" for family education and the National Guiding Outline for Family Education; in 2020, the MOE and the CNCCC promulgated a notice regarding the work of caring for children during the COVID-19 pandemic; in 2021, the Supreme People's Procuratorate, the ACWF, and the CNCCC jointly issued two policy documents regarding the guidance of family education in handling cases involving minors. The CNCCC is listed as the last constitutor in all these policy documents. The CNCCC itself, in turn, rarely initiated joint policy actions involving other agencies/organizations. Although the CNCCC can issue policy documents under its own name, they are about ideological education, service provision, or internal management rather than influencing policies. In addition, even though a few local branches sporadically conducted surveys and influenced local policies based on those surveys, the CNCCC at the national level never took similar actions. However, the conferences, forums, and other

activities held by the CNCCC served as platforms to connect the grassroots and official institutions.

Because the CNCCC is a passive state corporatist organization, organizations affiliated with it fall into the same category, which is evident in their activities. The China Next Generation Education Foundation raises funds to support preschool education, family education, and out-of-school programs in urban and poverty-stricken rural areas. The China Youth Care Foundation promotes comprehensive development of children by funding health, music, arts, and sports programs throughout the country. Although the MOE serves as the supervisory body for both foundations, the CNCCC initiated them and directs their activities. They facilitate the CNCCC to serve children. None of them has other policy functions than implementation.

6.1.2 Bottom-up Organizations for Minors

In contrast to their giant official counterparts, bottom-up social organizations in the minors' field appear to be puny fellows. Most of them concentrate on providing services to minors and maintain silence as to policy issues. Only one bottom-up organization, Beijing Children's Legal Aid and Research Center (BCLARC), stands out as an active policy advocate adopting embedded pluralism.

6.1.2.1 Silent Pluralism

Established by Zhang Shuqin, a former police officer in Shaanxi Province, Beijing Sun Village Children's Education & Consultancy Center (Sun Village) fosters minor children of incarcerated parents and offers them special education, psychological counseling, professional training, and rights protection. Since 1996, when Zhang started the first village in Shaanxi, she has established nine villages in different locations in the country. Sun Village maintains a good relationship with the government thanks to her work experience within the official system. The China Charity Federation, affiliated with the MOCA, invited it to extend to Beijing in 2000. Some official documents recognized its fostering mode in 2006. In 2010, the China Charities Aid

Foundation for Children set up a special fund for Sun Village. However, this organization has no record of influencing policies and never made any policy initiatives. It neither conducted any surveys or investigations to collect opinions of children or relevant persons. Although minor children of incarcerated parents are also a target of the CCYL, as introduced before, the CCYL has yet to invite Sun Village to join its service projects or policy actions, which shows that Sun Village only has limited access to the official system.

New Day Foster Home was founded in 2000 by Karen Brenneman, an American philanthropist. It manages two facilities in Beijing and Guangdong Province. Cooperating with local children's welfare institutes (*ertong fuliyuan*) run by governments, it provides services, such as medical assistance, preschool education, and supporting foster families to orphans, disabled children, or children with severe illnesses from different locations in China. The organization has limited access to government sectors other than those children's welfare institutes. Influencing policies has never become an organizational objective.

A similar organization is the New Hope Foundation, registered in Hong Kong by Robin Hill, a British citizen, and his wife Joyce Hill, an Australian citizen⁴³. With permission from the Beijing Children's Welfare Institute, they began caring for abandoned children, many of whom were sick or disabled, in Beijing in 2000. In 2011, the MOCA allowed the New Hope Foundation to register a representative office in Beijing. Since 2000, it has established facilities in Beijing, Nanjing, and four cities in Henan Province in cooperation with local children's welfare institutes. In early 2019, the MOCA discontinued its childcare operation in the Beijing care center, citing newly implemented rules. However, this was not repression because its administrative office could

⁴³ They retired to Australia in early 2020. Dr. Steve Martin, originally a family practice physician from Texas, began leading the New Hope Foundation from then on.

remain in Beijing.⁴⁴ Providing services to orphaned children with special physical and medical needs has always been this organization's primary objective. It does not have records of influencing policies.

Ai You Foundation was the first private foundation in China. Wang Bing, board chairman of Ding Tian Capital Management Co. Limited, united a group of prominent Chinese entrepreneurs of private enterprises to initiate and manage the foundation in 2004. In 2018, it obtained the public fundraising certificate. This foundation provides medical and welfare assistance to orphans and children living in difficulties throughout the country. It also facilitated the startup and growth of other charity and environmental organizations. Although some organizations it supports are involved in policy actions, Ai You Foundation itself shows little interest in policy issues in the fields of minors or environment. In recent years, it has switched to support medical institutions instead of those organizations.⁴⁵

A group of media elites and experts in psychology or education founded the Beijing Abundance Foundation in 2015. The foundation's primary goal is to improve the mental health of minors between 6 and 16 years old. As the first social organization focusing on minors' mental health in Beijing, it mainly conducts the educational project of Joy Your Heart in a few counties in Hebei, Yunnan, and Xinjiang. The project offers schools, students, and their families lessons, training workshops, books, scholarships, and facilities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the foundation started a psychological intervention project to save people who intended to commit suicide. Although the foundation established the Joy Your Heart Minors' Education Research Center in 2017, it has not conducted any policy-oriented research and engaged in policy actions. The foundation had a research plan to publish a White Paper on the Mental Health Condition of

⁴⁴ See its self-introduction at <https://newhope.foundation/about-us/>, accessed November 4, 2020.

⁴⁵ See its annual reports from 2009 to 2021, available at <http://www.ayfoundation.org/cn/info/26>, accessed May 1, 2023.

Elementary and Middle School Students. However, it has failed to realize it.⁴⁶ Generally, influencing policies is not an objective of the Beijing Abundance Foundation.

Founded by a group of professionals in organizational management in 2011, Leadership Matrix Network⁴⁷ provides consulting services, including project management and capacity building, to minors-related institutions and projects. In cooperation with other organizations, it published three guidebooks for minors-related institutions. Interestingly, although some of its training projects included influencing policies such as anti-domestic violence and the welfare system for minors, the organization itself was not involved in any policy actions and never put forward policy initiatives under its own name. In this sense, it falls into the category of silent pluralism.

Applying the filtering criteria, this chapter studies nine internet websites in the field of minors. They are generally homogeneous. They provide health, entertainment, and education information, including family education, preschool education, supplemental school education, and out-of-school education. Several websites with BBS boost online communication between users. However, no information of rights protection or public policies is discovered, not to mention influencing policies. All these websites fall into the category of silent pluralism.

6.1.2.2 Embedded Pluralism: Policy Influence of the BCLARC

As mentioned above, the BCLARC is the only bottom-up organization adopting embedded pluralism in the minors' field. Tong Lihua, who established Zhicheng in 2005, founded the BCLARC in 1999 in cooperation with the CSJDPR (Tai 2015, 49). After more than two decades of development, Tong Lihua has formed a group named Zhicheng Public Interest Lawyers.⁴⁸ In

⁴⁶ See its work reports from 2015 to 2021, available at

<https://www.abundancefoundation.cn/index.php?m=content&c=index&a=lists&catid=21>, accessed May 1, 2023.

⁴⁷ Its officially registered name is Beijing Boyuantuozi Child Development Centre.

⁴⁸ Although Tong Lihua coordinates all the organizations and projects within the group, Zhicheng and the BCLARC are separately registered and managed.

2001, Tong Lihua published his book, *Legal Science of Minors*, inaugurating a new legal discipline in China. The following year, he published the *Guiding Book on China's Work of Rights Protection of Minors and Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency*. These two books laid the foundation of Tong's fame as a distinguished jurist and lawyer in the field of minors (Tai 2015, 48). In 2003, the BCLARC registered with the Beijing Bureau of Civil Affairs using the Beijing Bureau of Justice as its sponsoring unit, which made it China's first government-approved bottom-up social organization engaging in legal aid (Qi 2011, 635). In the same year, Tong successfully lobbied the All China Lawyers Association (ACLA) to establish the Special Committee for the Protection of Minors and he has served as the director of this committee since then. More importantly, he persuaded the ACLA to set up similar special committees in its local branches throughout the country (Qi 2011, 632-633). Based on these committees, the BCLARC organized the Cooperating Network of Lawyers Undertaking the Protection of Minors, and recruited more than 9,300 voluntary lawyers in 31 province-level administrative regions.⁴⁹ In addition to this official title, the BCLARC acts as the secretariat of the Special Committee for the Protection of Minors under the Beijing Lawyers Association and the Legal Affairs Department of the Office of Beijing Committee for the Protection of Minors residing in the CCYL's Beijing branch.

The BCLARC benefits from these official titles by obtaining legitimacy and multiple resources (Tai 2015, 49-51). For example, it regularly receives case subsidies from the China Legal Aid Foundation. In 2017, for another example, Zhicheng Law Firm, under the group, won a government procurement project to provide legal services to various sectors of the Beijing Municipal Government for three years. Originating from a personal donation, it set up a special

⁴⁹ Its self-introduction on its website, available at <https://chinachild.org/about/>, accessed May 3, 2023. In 2022, the BCLARC launched a project to facilitate the capacity building of five other bottom-up organizations engaging in legal aid to minors. These organizations are in different provinces other than Beijing.

fund under the China Legal Aid Foundation to subsidize cases ineligible for official legal aid and support qualified minors. The BCLARC also obtained opportunities to affect government officials' opinions by holding training sessions. Like Zhicheng, the BCLARC has also developed good relationships with various official institutions, such as the CCYL system, the ACWF system, the CNCCC, the NPC, the MOCA, the MOE, the MOH, the Central Commission for Comprehensive Management of Public Security, the court system, the procuratorate system, and multiple local governments. In 2011, the Economic and Social Council of the UN granted the BCLARC and Zhicheng special consultative status, a symbol of international recognition.

As rare experts who excel in legal theories and practices related to minors, Tong Lihua and his team members were invited to participate in many policy processes (Qi, 2011). Tong and his colleagues drafted and participated in the whole revising processes of the Minors' Law and Regulations of Beijing Municipality on the Protection of Minors (Tai 2015, 48, 50). In 2009, the MOCA invited the BCLARC to draft Regulations on the Assistance and Protection of Wandering Minors. Although this legislation failed to proceed, the 2011 state council policy document regarding wandering minors referred to the draft.⁵⁰ Based on invitations from multiple authorities, the BCLARC participated in the revisions of the Law on Lawyers, the Civil Procedure Law, the Criminal Procedure Law, Measures for Registration and Adoption of Children by Chinese Citizens, and the Working Procedure for Child Care Institutions. It also participated in the enactment of the Regulations on Legal Aid, the Regulations of Beijing Municipality on Legal Aid, the Outline of Chinese Children's Development (2011-2020), the General Rules of the Civil Law, the Civil Code, and multiple policy documents concerning the protection of minors issued by different authorities. Cooperating with local ACLA's Special Committees for the Protection of Minors, the BCLARC

⁵⁰ The author's interview with Zhang Xuemei, executive director of the BCLARC, on June 20, 2012, in Beijing.

participated in some local legislation on the protection of minors or the prevention of juvenile delinquency. It also provided legal advice or propositional drafts when the ACWF proposed the Family Education Promotion Law and the CCYL and the NPC prepared for the revisions of the Minor's Law and the Law on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency. In fact, the BCLARC was an active advocate for those revisions. Tong Lihua and his team submitted many proposals to the NPC through various channels and contributed to the final versions of the two revised laws adopted in 2020.

The most impressive case was the BCLARC's continuous participation in enacting the Anti-domestic Violence Law. In 2009, the ACWF invited the BCLARC to participate in its preparation of the legislation. Zhang Xuemei, executive director of the BCLARC, was involved in the whole legislative process. In 2011, 2012, and 2014, the BCLARC issued three research reports based on domestic violence cases against minors exposed by the media. In 2012, the ACWF invited Zhang to be the leading expert responsible for the issue of special protection of minors. In each stage of the legislation, the Legal Affairs Office of the State Council, the NPC, and the Supreme People's Court invited Zhang to submit proposals at symposiums they held. Tong Lihua also joined the NPC process in 2015. Before the second deliberation of the law in the NPC, the BCLARC held a symposium in which representatives of relevant official institutions and nongovernmental experts participated. Based on the discussion, the BCLARC submitted the last comprehensive written proposal to the NPC. The law was adopted on December 27, 2015. The final version includes many of the BCLARC's proposals.⁵¹

In addition to policy formulation and evaluation, the BCLARC was also invited to participate in agenda setting. Multiple authorities, including but not limited to the ACWF and the

⁵¹ Ibid.

NWCCW, the CCYL and its Beijing branch, the MOCA, the MOJ, and the MOPS, designated almost 20 research projects to the BCLARC, many of which led to the enactment of new policies. For example, in 2003 and 2006, the BCLARC conducted two research projects for the NWCCW regarding China's minors-related legislative framework. These reports influenced the ACWF and the NWCCW in the following years when they made plans to advocate for new policies. Sometimes, the BCLARC was involved in policy implementation. For example, invited by the ACWF/NWCCW and their local branches, Tong Lihua and Zhang Xuemei participated in the inspection of the implementation of the Outlines of Chinese Children's Development and the Outlines for the Development of Chinese Women multiple times; the NPC and Beijing Municipal People's Congress invited lawyers of the BCLARC to discuss the implementation of the Minors' Law; the BCLARC facilitated the CCYL's experiments on innovations of rights protection of minors and several service-oriented projects of the ACWF/NWCCW, to name a few.

When policymakers did not invite the BCLARC directly, it tried to influence policies indirectly. Responding to the solicitation of public opinions is one of the methods the BCLARC usually uses. For example, it brought forward policy proposals regarding tobacco control by responding to the solicitation of public opinions in revising the Regulations on the Sanitary Administration of Public Spaces in 2007 and the Advertising Law in 2014. Another crucial means is to submit policy proposals to the annual NPC and CPPCC sessions. Tong Lihua is a representative of the Beijing Municipal People's Congress, and Zhang Xuemei was a member of Fengtai District CPPCC. She is also a member of the Central Committee of the China Democratic League, one of eight legally recognized non-Communist political parties whose seats in the CPPCC are guaranteed. Both have used these identities and connections to submit policy proposals. For example, in 2012, they submitted proposals to the CPPCC, Fengtai District CPPCC, and

Beijing Municipal People's Congress regarding establishing particular sectors managing minors-related cases in the MOPS system. For another example, Zhang Xuemei drafted a research report on constructing and improving the juvenile justice system in 2009, based on which the Central Committee of the China Democratic League submitted a proposal to the CPPCC and later a proposal letter to the Politburo of the CCP in 2010. These proposals received positive feedback from top CCP leaders. They influenced the revision of the Criminal Procedure Law, which includes an ad hoc chapter stipulating the judicial proceedings for juvenile criminal cases.⁵² In 2018, Zhang Xuemei was elected a representative of Fengtai District People's Congress. In the following years, she submitted proposals via this channel, such as legal aid and social services to minors. Sometimes, the BCLARC also uses personal connections to submit policy proposals. For instance, in 2011, it organized a drafting group to facilitate Han Hong, a famous singer and a member of the CPPCC, to submit a proposal to the CPPCC regarding promoting the welfare of children living in difficulties.

Amplifying its voice through the media and allying with other institutions are also valid methods the BCLARC employs to influence policies (Qi 2011, 629-630). The typical case was the abolition of "the crime of whoring with underage girls." This crime was added to the Criminal Law with lighter penalties in 1997 and coexisted with "the crime of raping underage girls." This controversial crime triggered disputes from the outset. Some deemed it provided more protection to young female minors. In contrast, others argued it was inappropriate because a girl under 14 years has no right judgments on her behaviors and consequences, and therefore receiving money or other properties should not change "the crime of rape."

The BCLARC started to pay attention to sexual infringements on young minors in 2002

⁵² Ibid.

when it released a research report regarding the issue. Since then, multiple lawyers of the organization interviewed various media reporters and explicitly expressed their objections to the crime. Tong Lihua especially pointed out that the crime not only spared rapists but stigmatized victims. However, it remained untouched for a long time despite opposing voices because of institutional inertia and some influential jurists' insistence favoring the crime's preservation. In 2009, a case in Xishui County, Guizhou Province, aroused extensive public attention. Because multiple local civil servants and girls under 14 years old were involved and eventually the defendants were convicted of "the crime of whoring with underage girls," the public drastically questioned the rationality of the crime. The BCLARC grasped the opportunity by releasing a second research report to the media, which further heated the problem. At this moment, the ACWF joined the battle. Thanks to the existing good relationship between the BCLARC and the ACWF, the two organizations soon allied with each other to call for the abolition of the crime.⁵³ The BCLARC attended the symposiums the ACWF held, and they jointly accepted interviews with the media multiple times. It also facilitated drafting proposals the ACWF submitted to the NPC and the CPPCC.

In early 2013, the media disclosed more cases, which incurred another wave of public discontent. This time, another sympathetic official institution, the Supreme People's Court, emerged to tackle the issue. Because of the reputation of the BCLARC and its good connection with the Supreme People's Court, the court invited the BCLARC to attend its symposiums and contribute its research and other materials. In October 2013, the Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuratorate, the MOPS, and the MOJ jointly issued Opinions on Punishing Crimes of Sexual Offence against Minors, which includes many of BCLARC's proposals. This

⁵³ Ibid.

policy document compromised “the crime of whoring with underage girls” and paved the way to its final abolishment. Under tremendous pressure from both the grassroots and influential official institutions, the NPC held a meeting to discuss the crime in 2014 and incorporated the issue into its revision of the Criminal Law in early 2015. It invited the ACWF and the BCLARC to participate in the process. The BCLARC released the third research report regarding sexual infringements on young minors and put forward comprehensive policy proposals in the same year. As previously introduced, the NPC adopted the Amendment (IX) to the Criminal Law in August 2015. It completely abolishes “the crime of whoring with underage girls.” From then on, these criminal behaviors would be severely punished as “the crime of raping underage girls.”

Like Zhicheng, the BCLARC provides legal services to minors in four aspects: legal education, legal counseling, legal aid, and legal research. It also conducts charity activities to aid children living in difficulties. In 2017, it founded Beijing Zhongzhi Childcare Foundation to fund some of its service projects. The BCLARC frequently interacts with minors and related people through hotlines and other service-oriented projects. It actively collects their opinions and articulates the interests of minors. The BCLARC has also established a routine to analyze data collected through these sources and cases it managed, from which it identifies crucial policy issues (Qi 2011, 627-628, 632). Just like Zhicheng, the BCLARC sometimes created influential lawsuits to facilitate policy changes and protect the interests of its constituencies. As early as 2001, lawyers of the BCLARC aided a middle school student in suing the State Tobacco Monopoly Administration and 24 tobacco corporations, demanding that they publicize the harm of smoking and prohibit minors’ access to tobacco. The BCLARC also mobilized a few well-known media outlets to cover the lawsuit and attract public attention. Although the courts refused to accept the case, the State Tobacco Monopoly Administration issued a policy document requiring retail

counters to place signs that “selling tobacco to minors is forbidden,” and all internet websites in its system to add the information of the harm of smoking. Another case occurred in 2004 when lawyers of the BCLARC aided Gao Pan, who was convicted of robbery and sentenced to death by the High People's Court of Hebei Province, even if he was under 18 years old when he committed the crime. After his execution, Tong Lihua submitted a written statement to the NPC, petitioning the Supreme People's Court to recall the power of death penalty review from high courts at the provincial level. Xiao Yang, then president of the Supreme People's Court, who was attending the annual session of the NPC at that time, responded positively. Eventually, in 2006, the NPC adopted the amendment to the Organic Law of the People's Courts that stipulates the Supreme People's Court should review all death penalties.⁵⁴ In June 2021, the BCLARC filed China's first civil public interest litigation regarding minors' protection against famous Tencent Games, claiming its most popular online game, Honor of Kings, was harmful to minors. Thanks to extensive media coverage, the case drew public attention. Although the case is still ongoing, it has incurred a policy change. In August 2021, the National Press and Publication Administration promulgated a policy document that strictly limits the registration and duration for minors to play online games.

Like other organizations in the category of embedded pluralism, however, the BCLARC can only achieve partial success in terms of the effectiveness of policy influence, no matter how influential it is compared with other bottom-up organizations in the minors' field, as admitted by Zhang Xuemei.⁵⁵ Policy proposals submitted via outside means generally have a smaller chance to be accepted. Some of its policy proposals were rejected by policymakers who invited the BCLARC to participate in the policy process, such as enacting the Anti-domestic Violence Law and some other legislation. Even policy documents drafted by the BCLARC were eventually

⁵⁴ Zhang Xuemei presented these two cases during the interview.

⁵⁵ The author's interview with Zhang Xuemei on June 20, 2012, in Beijing.

changed to some extent. In fact, whether a policy drafted by the BCLARC could survive to the last stage was uncontrollable. For example, the BCLARC drafted the Beijing Municipal Implementation Measures of the Law on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency in 2004 and the Regulations on Child Welfare in 2011, designated by the CCYL Beijing branch and the MOCA, respectively. However, they failed to proceed because of divergent propositions held by different authorities.⁵⁶ In 2013, the BCLARC drafted a propositional version of the Child Welfare Law out of its own initiative, but it received little attention. Although the MOCA again invited the BCLARC and other institutions to discuss the Regulations on Child Welfare in 2017, the BCLARC lost the status of the major drafter of the legislation. By the end of 2022, the legislation was still in the research stage.

6.1.3 Summary of Organizations for Minors

This section studies the policy influence of social organizations for minors. Top-down organizations dominate the field in terms of both quantity and policy influence. Officially representing minors, the ACWF and the CCYL act actively to influence minors-related policies. Four affiliated organizations within their systems, including the CSJDPR, the CYCRC, the CFES, and the CNCC after 2011, are empowered by their hosting organizations to actively participate in the whole policy process, which makes them a part of their active state corporatism. Another four affiliated organizations within these systems that undertake minors' work are only assigned the responsibility of implementing specific policies and, therefore, fall into the category of passive state corporatism. One organization, the All-China Women and Children Development Association under the ACWF, has become inactive in recent years and falls into the category of symbolic state corporatism. As discovered before, policy influence modes of social organizations affiliated with

⁵⁶ Ibid.

state corporatist organizations result from the authorization and empowerment of their supervisory bodies. It becomes more evident in the minor's field. Organizations affiliated with the ACWF or the CCYL spread in all three categories of top-down organizations, depending on the roles authorized by their supervisory organizations. The CNCC was only an implementation entity before 2011. However, it has been significantly more active since the ACWF and the CFES set up the Family Education Research and Instructing Center that year. Hence, the organization has moved from passive state corporatism to active state corporatism. On the contrary, the ACWF marginalized the All-China Women and Children Development Association a few years after its founding and made it only a symbol.

As a quasi-mass organization, the Party-state does not grant the CNCCC the status of representing minors and the power to participate in the whole policy process. The primary function of this organization and its two affiliated organizations is to implement minors-related policies. As a result, they fall into the category of passive state corporatism. This finding indicates that organizations affiliated with passive state corporatist organizations can hardly be active state corporatist organizations. In other words, passive state corporatist organizations do not have the authority and the capacity to authorize and empower their affiliated organizations to act as active policy advocates.

All five top-down organizations affiliated with other agencies, such as the MOCA and the MOE, adopt the mode of passive state corporatism. It is consistent with the conclusion drawn in Chapter Three that top-down organizations affiliated with government agencies tend to play a passive role.

Among bottom-up organizations, the BCLARC is the only organization that actively represents the interests of minors and influences minors-related policies. Sharing the same founder

as Zhicheng, it also adopts the same mode of policy influence. It serves as another typical example of embedded pluralism. The case shows again that cooperative professionals may have better opportunities to establish relatively harmonious and stable relationships with the official system and have more policy influence. All six other bottom-up organizations and all internet websites focus on providing services and remain silent in the policy area. Critical pluralism and reduced embedded pluralism do not exist in this field. Overall, silent pluralism is the popular mode in the minor's field. Excluding the BCLARC, in China, there is no cohesive child rights movement that could influence policy or reflect the demands and needs of children (Howell et al. 2019, 209). Therefore, it is unsurprising that none of the organizations in this field suffered from state oppression. Table 6.1 generalizes the categorization of the policy influence of organizations for minors. The following section will study social organizations for seniors.

Table 6.1 Categorization of the Policy Influence of Organizations for Minors

top-down organizations	active state corporatism	the ACWF, the CCYL, and four affiliated organizations (CSJDPR, CYCRC, CFES, CNCC after 2011)
	passive state corporatism	five affiliated organizations within the ACWF or the CCYL systems, including the CNCC before 2011; the CNCCC and two affiliated organizations; five organizations affiliated to other agencies,
	symbolic state corporatism	All-China Women and Children Development Association under the ACWF
bottom-up organizations	embedded pluralism	the BCLARC
	reduced embedded pluralism	
	critical pluralism	
	silent pluralism	Sun Village, New Day Foster Home, New Hope Foundation, Ai You Foundation, Beijing Abundance Foundation, Leadership Matrix Network, nine internet websites

6.2 Social Organizations for Seniors

As defined by the Law on the Protection of Rights and Interests of the Elderly (the Seniors' Law hereafter), "seniors" or "the elderly" means persons at or over the age of 60 years. According

to data from the 2020 National Population Census, China had 264.02 million senior people, accounting for 18.7% of the whole population of China. Among these people, 190.64 million were 65 years or over, accounting for 13.5% of the whole population.⁵⁷ In fact, China has stepped into aging society since 2000 based on standards of the UN (Lin 2014, 145; Wu, 2022).⁵⁸ Nowadays, China is the country that has the most senior people in the world (Jin 2011, 183), accounting for 26.22% of the world senior population who were 65 years or over in 2020.⁵⁹

However, as stated at the beginning of the last chapter, this vast population is underrepresented in China compared with other underprivileged groups studied in this research. Generally speaking, neither top-down nor bottom-up organizations actively represent seniors' interests and influence policies related to them. Because of the absence of influential organizations in this field, atomized senior people must face policymaking authorities individually and play the role of policy-takers to a large extent. As Jing and Liu (2010, 13) comment, as a population with a marginal status, older people find it difficult to articulate their demands and push for favorable policies. The government remains a dominant power in determining the agendas of and solutions to controversial policy issues such as delaying retirement age and the disparity in different pension schemes, e.g., those who worked within the system of the government and public institutions and those who worked out of the system receive different pension treatments⁶⁰ (Shi, 2011; Jin, 2011; Li, 2014; Dong and Wang 2014, 271-272; Johansson and Cheng 2016, 927; Zhu and Walker, 2018a). Regarding service provision, there is a massive “care gap” between the need for social

⁵⁷ Communiqué of the Seventh National Population Census, available at http://www.gov.cn/guoqing/2021-05/13/content_5606149.htm, accessed April 23, 2023.

⁵⁸ According to UN standards, an aging society means that more than 7% of the population is at or above the age of 65 or more than 10% of the population is at or above the age of 60.

⁵⁹ In 2020, 727 million people worldwide were 65 or over. See World Population Ageing 2020 Highlights, published by the UN in October 2020, available at

https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/files/documents/2020/Sep/un_pop_2020_p_f_ageing_10_key_messages.pdf, accessed April 23, 2023. This publication defines “older persons” as persons aged 65 or over.

⁶⁰ In December 2014, the NPC approved the State Council's report, which proposed a plan to unify the dual pension schemes. Some reforms were implemented after that, but the disparity between those two groups remains.

care and its supply (Zhu and Walker, 2018b).

According to the author's interview with the leader of a local seniors' organization⁶¹, the underdevelopment of bottom-up social organizations in this field may result from the following facts. First, Chinese senior citizens tend to be highly wary of organizing or joining nongovernmental organizations, especially those engaging in policy activities, to avoid political risks because they have experienced political chaos in China's history. Second, traditional Chinese culture favors filial piety and family support instead of socialized elderly support⁶², limiting the development of social organizations providing socialized services to senior people. Last but not least, organizations for seniors receive much less attention and funding from international sponsors than other social organizations do because seniors-related issues are usually deemed less relevant to human rights, and seniors' organizations in developed countries generally focus on their own constituencies.

As far as top-down social organizations in this field are concerned, they receive less attention and funding from the Party-state than other social organizations. First, unlike workers, women, and the youth, the CCP has never mobilized senior people as a particular group to take part in the socialist revolution and construction (Jing and Liu 2010, 14; Liu 2016, 156). Consequently, there are no mass organizations in this field. Second, seniors-related issues have never become sociopolitical emergencies, such as the HIV/AIDS crisis, or international foci such as environmental problems. Finally, influential social entrepreneurs, such as Deng Pufang in the field of disability, are absent in the field of seniors. Senior people who work(ed) within the official system already obtain privileges, while ordinary seniors lack the power to establish peak

⁶¹ The author's interview with Wang Yanrui, founder and director of Leling Senior Citizen Cooperative, on June 13, 2012, in Beijing.

⁶² Zhang (2019) finds that the traditional concept of filial piety is changing, but it still has substantial influence in Chinese Society.

organizations.

6.2.1 Top-down Organizations for Seniors

Similar to the field of minors, top-down organizations dominate the seniors' field. However, for the reasons analyzed above, mass organizations and active state corporatism are absent. Some organizations affiliated with the MOCA or the MOH systems perform the function of policy implementation, while others play a symbolic role.

Active state corporatism is missing in the health field, in which government agencies monopolize the policy process and leave only policy implementation to official organizations. The same scenario emerges in the seniors' field.

6.2.1.1 Organizations in the MOCA System and the MOH System

The MOCA is the government agency that assumes major responsibilities for managing seniors-related affairs. In 1994, the MOCA and the former State Planning Commission enacted the Seven-year Developmental Outline for China's Seniors' Work (1994-2000), the first national plan in this field. The MOCA also drafted the Seniors' Law, which was adopted in 1996 and has been the first and the only legislation at the national level in the field of seniors. In 1999, the State Council established a trans-ministry coordinating institution called the National Working Committee on Aging (Wu 2022, 193), which is currently composed of 32 institutions of the Party-state and headed by an official at the level of vice premier. However, as a vice-ministry-level administrative organ, the office of this committee is located in the MOCA, and high-level officials within the MOCA system hold its leadership. For example, the minister and one of the vice ministers of the MOCA concurrently served as the director and the vice director of the office, and the executive deputy director of the office, Wang Jianjun, was a departmental chief of the MOCA. Since its founding, the National Working Committee on Aging Office (NWCAO) has become the major administrative agency managing seniors-related affairs. The NWCAO has enacted five

“five-year plans” for the development of seniors-related affairs since 2001 and administered their implementation and evaluation. The NWCAO and the MOCA also drafted revisions of the Seniors’ Law in 2009, 2012, 2015, and 2018. In addition to comprehensive or specific seniors-related policies issued by the NWCAO, it jointly issued many policies with other official institutions. In the field of seniors, some agencies other than the NWCAO and the MOCA, such as the MOHRSS, the MOH, and the NDRC, are also important policymaking agencies.

In March 2018, the central government moved the NWCAO to the MOH and renamed the MOH National Health Commission in the same month. In September 2018, Ma Xiaowei, commission minister, concurrently held the director of the NWCAO. Wang Jianjun became an official of the MOH and still serves as the executive deputy director of the NWCAO. All affiliated organizations of the NWCAO also transferred to the MOH. In addition to departmental rules and industrial standards, the MOH enacted multiple policies cooperating with other agencies, such as the National Medium and Long-term Plan of Actively Responding to Aging of Population promulgated in 2019. In March 2023, the central government moved the NWCAO and all its affiliated organizations back to the MOCA. Since then, the MOCA has resumed taking major responsibilities for managing seniors-related affairs, while the MOH focuses on elderly health.

To attend the First World Assembly on Aging held in Vienna in 1982, the Chinese government created the Chinese Committee for World Assembly on Aging, renamed the National Committee on Aging of China after the assembly. In 1995, the State Council renamed it China National Committee on Ageing (CNCA). Affiliated with the MOCA, this seemingly peak organization in the field of seniors mainly participated in international communication, and it never performed substantial functions. In 2005, authorized by the state Commission for Public Sector Reform, the NWCAO incorporated the CNCA. As a result, these two institutions have become

“one organ with two signs.” The executive deputy director of the NWCAO concurrently holds the president of the CNCA. The name of the NWCAO is used in the domestic setting, while the name of the CNCA is usually used in international communication and cooperation. Although the CNCA is a member of the National Working Committee on Aging, its name does not appear on any seniors-related policy documents. Because the CNCA is not granted de facto policy functions and only acts as a symbol of China’s seniors-related affairs, it falls into the category of symbolic state corporatism. The existence of a symbolic peak organization makes the field of seniors exceptional in this research. When the NWCAO moved to the MOH in March 2018, the CNCA moved together. They also moved back to the MOCA together in 2023. In 2019, the CNCA started to organize research projects under its own name. However, the CNCA and the NWCAO are always “one organ with two signs.” The CNCA’s status and function generally remain unchanged.

As the major administrative agencies of seniors-related affairs, the NWCAO/the MOCA and the MOH need social organizations to facilitate policy implementation in different aspects. Eleven organizations affiliated with the NWCAO/the MOCA or the MOH perform such a function. They seldom bring forward policy initiatives. Even though a few of them participated in policy formulation/evaluation, they were basically directed to do so. Therefore, these organizations fall into the category of passive state corporatism. However, they are still important for these agencies. Jing and Liu (2010, 19-20) argue that as a relatively weak agency, the NWCAO employs multiple strategies to strengthen its own status in the official system, including using affiliated organizations to offer a greater range of services and increase its political influence. It is consistent with the findings of this research. Furthermore, this research discovers that the NWCAO, the MOCA, and the MOH employ the same strategy.

The China Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics (CAGG), previously known as the

Gerontological Society of China, is a research organization under the NWCAO to provide intellectual support. It held annual conferences, symposiums, and thematic forums and published articles, books, and reports. Sometimes, the CAGG directly participated in service provision. For example, its volunteers provided medical services in a poverty alleviation action organized by the NWCAO in 2016; in 2018, it participated in implementing a national education plan regarding the aging of the population promulgated by 14 institutions in the National Working Committee on Aging. However, unlike some other official research organizations studied in this research, the CAGG never made policy initiatives based on these publications and research activities. The NWCAO does not grant it the power to participate in other policy stages than implementation. The CAGG was not invited to join policy activities regarding formulation or evaluation. It neither reached out to collect and articulate the opinions of senior people, although some of its activities might serve as platforms to connect grassroots and government sectors. In its 2014 work review, the CAGG itself acknowledged that it had not conducted sufficient surveys and investigations and failed to influence policies effectively.⁶³ The NWCAO assigns the CAGG the mission to organize research but allocating no funding to the latter.⁶⁴ It does not seriously treat the CAGG's research outcomes as policy inputs, which differs from the close relationships between most mass organizations and their research arms. In September 2015, the CAGG established a Committee of Experts for Think Tank on Aging to strengthen its research and policy influence. After that, the CAGG had more policy activities. It conducted a few policy-oriented research projects, including a research project regarding the development of seniors-related affairs in the 14th "five-year plan" and a research project regarding the revision of the Seniors' Law, designated by the NWCAO and

⁶³ The CAGG's 2014 work review is available at http://www.cagg.org.cn/toutiao/index_5.html, accessed February 24, 2016.

⁶⁴ Liu Weilin, the president of the CAGG, disclosed in his address at the Sixth National Congress of the CAGG held in December 2017 that the organization received no financial allocations. The address is available at <http://www.cagg.org.cn/toutiao/2017-12-14/1969.html>, accessed January 17, 2019.

the MOCA or the MOH. In addition, it started to formulate some technological standards.⁶⁵ However, the CAGG still has no records of directly attending policy meetings of the NWCAO, the MOCA, or the MOH and submitting policy proposals.

The China Aging Development Foundation (CADF) functions as other official foundations studied in this research to raise funds and provide senior people with multiple services, such as establishing senior centers or nursing homes, conducting service-oriented activities, and aiding seniors in poverty (Lin 2014, 149). It is an essential supporting organization for the implementation of seniors-related policies. Like other organizations under the NWCAO, the CADF seldom participates in other policy stages and brings forward few policy initiatives. One exception was that its president, Li Baoku⁶⁶, submitted a joint proposal to the CPPCC as a former CPPCC member in 2005 regarding the startup of the Loving Nursing Project, which aimed to provide long-term care to seniors who lost the ability to take care of themselves by recruiting and supporting private facilities. The proposal received endorsements from high-level officials of the State Council, and the project has been successfully extended to 31 province-level administrative regions. It has become a famous brand project of the CADF. The CADF conducted two surveys on seniors' psychological needs and held a few symposiums. However, it did not make efforts to influence policies based on the production of these activities. In 2017, the MOCA and the NWCAO ordered Li Baoku to resign. Serious managerial and financial problems were discovered after that. The CADF's business stalled for over two years until new leadership came to power in 2019. In the following years, the CADF still focused on service-oriented projects and activities without touching any policy issues.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ The CAGG's work reviews from 2019 to 2022, available at <http://cagg.org.cn/portal/list/index/id/65.html>, accessed May 8, 2023.

⁶⁶ Li Baoku was also a vice minister of the MOCA, former executive deputy director of the NWCAO, and former president of the CNCA.

⁶⁷ See its work reports from 2018 to 2022 at <http://www.cadf.org.cn/category/nianjianbaogao/1>, accessed May 8, 2023.

The China Association of the Universities for the Aged (CAUA), under the NWCAO, coordinates and guides the establishment and development of universities and other educational institutions for seniors throughout the country.⁶⁸ It is the primary organization to implement educational policies related to seniors. However, the country had fallen behind in enacting particular policies regarding seniors' education. China did not attempt to enact such policies for seniors' education at the national level until the MOE drafted the National Guiding Plan for the Development of Seniors' Education (2016-2020) in 2014. The MOE invited the CAUA to conduct several relevant research projects and provide its opinions in the process. Since the State Council promulgated the plan in 2016, the CAUA has listed the implementation of the plan as one of its missions in the constitution and has become one of the major entities to implement the plan. Like other organizations under the NWCAO, the CAUA put forward few policy initiatives. Although its president, Zhang Xiaolin, was a member of the CPPCC, he never submitted a formal policy proposal regarding seniors' education.⁶⁹ The CAUA conducted the first national survey of students at universities for seniors in 2013-2015 and issued the first report on seniors' education in 2021. However, it did not try influencing policies based on these research results. Influencing policies is constantly absent in its work plans.⁷⁰

Founded by the NWCAO in 2010, the China Silver Industry Association (CSIA) is a trade association serving the silver industry that produces goods for or provides services to senior people. The daily work of the CSIA focuses on implementing policies related to the silver industry and

⁶⁸ According to the CAUA's self-introduction, more than eight million students are enrolled in more than 70 thousand educational institutions for seniors in China, and another several million study through remote education. The self-introduction is available at http://caua1988.com/nzcms_list_news.asp?id=684&sort_id=659, accessed January 22, 2019.

⁶⁹ In an interview with a reporter from The CPPCC Fortnightly conducted in March 2017, Zhang Xiaolin mentioned that he would discuss the development of seniors' education at the conference. However, he did not say that he planned to submit a formal policy proposal or had submitted such proposals before. The report is available at http://caua1988.com/nzcms_show_news.asp?id=6185, accessed January 22, 2019.

⁷⁰ See its work plans from 2018-2023 at <https://www.caual988.com/#/news/5>, accessed May 9, 2023.

providing services to its members, such as hosting or participating in expositions, conferences, forums, and training sessions. The CSIA sometimes participated in policy formulation based on directives of the NWCAO, the MOCA, or the MOH. For example, it has created dozens of industrial standards since its founding, including non-mandatory group standards and mandatory national standards. For another example, designated by multiple agencies, it also conducted multiple research projects for the enactment of various seniors-related policies. However, its participation in policy formulation has limited effectiveness. For instance, directed by the NWCAO, the CSIA drafted the National Medium and Long-term Plan for the Development of the Silver Industry (2013-2020). Because stakeholders related to the industry held different opinions on the draft, the plan has yet to come into being.⁷¹ The CSIA is involved in neither agenda setting nor policy evaluation, and it seldom brings forward policy initiatives even though its president served as a representative of the NPC. The CSIA conducted several large-scale surveys of seniors, e.g., a survey of home-based care for seniors in ten cities. However, it did not make efforts to advocate for relevant policies based on these surveys.

China Association of Social Welfare under the MOCA was also founded in 2010. At first, seniors-related affairs were just a part of its work. Since it successfully held the China International Senior Services Expo in 2012, the association has increasingly concentrated on acting as a trade association in the senior services industry. In 2015, it was renamed the China Association of Social Welfare and Senior Service (CASWSS). In addition to hosting the expo every year, the CASWSS mainly promotes the standardization of senior services and provides relevant training and assessment. Directed by the MOCA, it drafted a few industrial standards and the Construction Plan

⁷¹ See a report from China Real Estate Business Weekly on June 18, 2014, available at <http://zq.house.163.com/14/0618/09/9V0STHEQ022200U8.html>, accessed August 18, 2016. Also see the work report of the CSIA's first board of directors released in January 2021, available at http://www.zgllcy.com/chanye/news_in.php?f=dongtai&nohao=896, accessed May 9, 2023.

for the Standardization of Senior Services (2016-2020). However, like the CSIA, the CASWSS is not involved in agenda setting or policy evaluation and seldom brings forward policy initiatives. Implementing policies relevant to social welfare and senior service is a primary goal of its constitution. However, the constitution does not include any articles of influencing policies.⁷²

In recent years, the NWCAO and the MOCA have made more efforts to support the senior services industry. In 2013, the NWCAO established the Hualing Smart Elderly Care Industry Development Center (Hualing) to advance the application of intelligent technologies in senior services. In 2017, the MOCA, the MOH, and the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology jointly issued the Action Plan for the Development of Smart Elderly Care Industry (2017-2020). Hualing is one of the major entities involved in implementing the plan. Cooperating with local governments and enterprises, Hualing has constructed many experimental bases and communities for smart elderly care and has created a nationwide online managing platform for smart elderly health care. Designated by the NWCAO, it also conducted several research projects regarding the development of the smart elderly care industry and enacted a few industrial standards. In 2015, the NWCAO started the Huashou Community-based Elderly Care Service Development Center (Huashou), which aims to explore new modes of community-based elderly care. In a short period, Huashou conducted an experimental project in Langfang City, Hebei Province, and launched Leling Project to mobilize enterprises to fund elderly care community services. In cooperation with the China Volunteers Association, it started another project called Neighborhood Watch Service Station in 2022. Founded by the MOCA in 2011, Zhongyi Aging Development Center (Zhongyi) tries to combine the construction of senior apartments, community-based care, and intelligent technologies to create a comprehensive solution to elderly care. It has mainly conducted the

⁷² Its constitution is available at <https://www.caswss.org.cn/xiehuizhangcheng1.html>, accessed May 9, 2023.

Zhongyi Elderly Care Project to realize this design, cooperating with more than 20 local governments and state-owned enterprises. Supported by Hualing, it established a digital platform to sustain the project in 2023. All these three organizations serve as important implementors of policies regarding senior services. Neither of them has a record of influencing policies.

As introduced above, the MOH replaced the MOCA as the leading agency managing seniors-related affairs by taking over the NWCAO and all its affiliated organizations from 2018 to 2023. As a ministry that specializes in elderly health, the MOH also needs to strengthen relevant organizations affiliated initially with it to facilitate policy implementation and formulation. Since 2018, the MOH has attached more importance to three associations and allocated more resources to them. Previously, these organizations had few policy activities and played symbolic roles in the field of seniors. Since the MOH reinforced their policy function, they have become important implementors of seniors-related policies, especially in elderly health. However, they cannot participate in the whole policy process, especially agenda setting. Therefore, they also fall into the category of passive state corporatism.

The Chinese Association of Geriatric Research (CAGR) and the Chinese Aging Well Association (CAWA) conduct geriatric studies and provide various services for elderly health care. In 2018, the CAGR established a think tank on seniors' health, which held the annual summit of elderly health in the next few years. In 2019, the MOH and the NWCAO designated the CAGR to conduct the China Aging Health Promotion Project, a large-scale project to implement the Medium and Long-term Plan of Actively Responding to Aging of Population promulgated by the CCP Central Committee and the State Council. Since 2021, the CAGR has started to enact group standards regarding elderly health. In the next two years, it completed 16 standards. In 2022, it surveyed seniors' vaccination and issued a blue book according to the results. The leadership of

the CAWA changed in mid-2017. Liu Yuanli, a well-known medical reform expert, became its new president. In 2019, the CAWA published the first Blue Book of Elderly Health, which includes a policy report. Since 2020, the association has started to enact group standards. In addition to training medical institutions, the CAWA supports the application of technological innovations in elderly health in medical institutions. In 2021, it established a digital platform for elderly health management in county-level hospitals. The Chinese Association for Life Care (CALC) provides long-term and hospice care services through counseling, training, and research. It added participation in policymaking in its constitution and started to enact group standards in 2018. In May 2020, Li Xiaolin, daughter of former Premier Li Peng, was appointed acting president of its board.⁷³ In 2021, the MOH approved the CALC's proposal to establish palliative care units throughout the country and designated the CALC to conduct a survey. The CALC also established experimental service stations to provide palliative care.⁷⁴

6.2.1.2 Organizations Affiliated with Other Agencies/Organizations

In addition to organizations in the MOCA and MOH systems, eight national organizations for seniors are affiliated with other agencies/organizations. Senior elites within the official system created these top-down organizations. Five of them focus on hobby/fellowship activities and public communication. These include the Chinese Veteran's Sports Association under the General Administration of Sport, the Chinese Railway Veterans Association under the former Ministry of Railways and the current China Railway Corporation, and three organizations affiliated with the Ministry of Culture, upgraded to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in 2018—the Research Association of Painting and Calligraphy of the Aged People of China, the China Association for the Communication and Promotion of Aged Culture, and the China Senior Photographers

⁷³ She resigned in 2022.

⁷⁴ See a news report of the CALC at <http://www.cnafic.org/xhdt/14775.jhtml>, accessed May 10, 2023.

Association. These five organizations do not list influencing policies as one of their organizational goals and are not involved in any policy activities. They neither reach out to their members nor try to protect their interests.

The Chinese Association for Elderly Legal Workers under the MOJ lists studying legal issues related to seniors and influencing relevant policies as its major organizational tasks. However, this association has usually remained inactive since its founding in 1990. Occasionally, it took action to popularize laws. It did not engage in policy activities except holding a symposium on seniors' rights protection in 2009. In general, this association does not consistently fulfill its organizational objectives and is not a major implementor of seniors-related policies. It falls into the category of symbolic state corporatism.

The last two organizations, the China Senior Professors Association (CSPA) under the MOE and the China Association of Senior Scientists and Technicians (CASST) under the China Association for Science and Technology, were established to utilize various specialties of retired professors, scientists, and technologists. The CSPA created dozens of educational and research institutions and held a few symposiums and forums. The CASST conducted numerous field investigations and studies and regularly provided scientific and technological education, training, and services. They also participated in poverty alleviation in rural areas and science popularization in youth. Both tried to influence policies and were sometimes successful. For example, the CSPA sent former Premier Wen Jiabao a letter and submitted proposals to the State Council after holding a forum on the construction of ecological civilization in 2008; in the same year, the CASST submitted the State Council a proposal regarding the construction of the service system of rural methane. These proposals received attention and comments from top officials of the State Council and influenced relevant policies. From 2005 to 2012, 38 of the CASST's proposals received

comments from the central leadership, and more than 500 of its proposals received comments from provincial leadership.⁷⁵ In 2021, the CASST's multiple proposals regarding revising the Law on Scientific and Technological Progress were adopted.⁷⁶ However, most of their proposals addressed scientific and technological issues rather than policies related to senior people. The only exceptional case was the CASST's continuous efforts to install elevators in older buildings for the convenience of senior residents, which was mentioned in former Premier Li Keqiang's annual government work reports in 2018, 2019, and 2020.⁷⁷ In general, as organizations for seniors, they play a symbolic role, although they are somewhat influential as professional associations.

These top-down organizations have no granted power to participate in the policy process related to seniors. Because their supervisory bodies are not major agencies managing seniors-related affairs, they neither play an essential role in implementing seniors-related policies. Their supervisory bodies even marginalize several of them because their business has never been a mainstream part of their respective sectors. Falling short of attention and resources, they can only launch limited activities. Those senior elites within the official system who create or manage these organizations maintain a distance from the grassroots. Therefore, they pay little attention to ordinary seniors and fail to represent their interests. In addition to those symbolic state corporatist organizations found in the women's field, another cluster of such organizations appears in the field of seniors.

6.2.2 Bottom-up Organizations for Seniors

Compared with other fields, fewer bottom-up organizations at the national level are found

⁷⁵ See an address regarding submitting policy proposals of Zhang Chunyuan, then vice president of the CASST, available at <http://www.casst.org.cn/cms/contentmanager.do?method=view&pageid=view&id=cms0686b11e4843e>, accessed August 25, 2016.

⁷⁶ See its 2021 work report, available at <http://www.casst.org.cn/cms/contentmanager.do?method=view&pageid=view&id=cms071b2ade48fde>, accessed May 10, 2023.

⁷⁷ See its 2020 work report, available at <http://www.casst.org.cn/cms/contentmanager.do?method=view&pageid=view&id=cms000f61fc884a8>, accessed May 10, 2023.

in the field of seniors. Two of them adopt(ed) embedded pluralism, while the other two fall into the category of silent pluralism. Internet websites remain in the latter category, like most of their counterparts in other fields.

6.2.2.1 Embedded Pluralism

Founded as a nursing home in Tianjin in 1995, Hetong has developed into a public interest group incorporating Hetong Elderly Welfare Association, Hetong Elderly Welfare Foundation, and multiple private non-enterprise entities. These organizations share the same management team headed by Fang Jiake⁷⁸, the prominent founder of Hetong. Because Fang had some official background before, he built up connections with a former deputy director of the Tianjin Bureau of Civil Affairs and other people within the official system, which brought Hetong formal registration and other resources from the outset.⁷⁹ In the following years, Hetong expanded quickly to other parts of the country—it also set up an office in Beijing—and gradually established its leading status in private nursing homes in China. In this process, Hetong has established and maintained good relationships with local governments and some central agencies, including the MOCA. For example, Hetong invited Cui Naifu, former minister of the MOCA and former president of the China Charity Federation, to be its honorary president. Subsidies and project incomes granted by governments or other official institutions have become important complementary financial sources for Hetong. It also inaugurated a new public-private partnership mode to provide elderly care services (Maags, 2021). Fang Jiake has grown into an expert in long-term care and acquired a few official titles from institutions under the MOCA and Tianjin City, including honorary vice president of the China Charity Federation.

⁷⁸ Wong and Tang (2006-2007, 636) document how Fang created Hetong.

⁷⁹ It is according to one of Fang Jiake's blog articles regarding the history of Hetong, available at http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_8bae62b10102wzvm.html, accessed October 15, 2016.

As an officially recognized expert, Fang Jiake sometimes received invitations to attend policy meetings. For example, in June 2016, the MOCA and the NDRC invited him to attend an expert meeting deliberating on policy documents promoting the quality of elderly care services. These two agencies invited him again in September to discuss the thirteenth “five-year plan” for the elderly care system. For another example, in October 2016, the CPPCC invited him to attend one biweekly deliberative symposium, and he presented Hetong’s opinions on the role of social actors in providing elderly care services.⁸⁰ Hetong also participated in local policymaking. For instance, in 2020, Fang attended a meeting by the Tianjin Bureau of Healthcare Security to discuss long-term care insurance experiments in Tianjin City.

As early as 2002, the MOCA and the former Ministry of Labor and Social Security delegated Fang to draft the National Occupational Standard of Elderly Care Workers. Hetong has also served as an implemental institution of this standard by creating training outlines and textbooks and providing training courses in its vocational school. Sponsored by the China Charity Federation, Hetong held 15 National Elderly Home Management Forums from 2002 to 2019. After the Wenchuan earthquake in 2008, Hetong organized many private elderly homes in different locations to form a National Union for Long-term Care and provide professional care to injured people. This union became one of the forum organizers in 2009 and has since served as Hetong’s platform to summon private elderly homes. These elderly homes discussed relevant policy issues with government officials, experts, and the media at these forums. The outcomes of these forums have influenced policymaking at national and local levels to some extent. One achievement was that the union drafted the Measures for Authenticating Long-term Care Institutions. In 2014, the China Charity Federation established the Special Committee for Long-term Care and combined

⁸⁰ The original text of his presentation is available at Fang Jiake’s micro-blogging platform: <https://www.weibo.com/ttarticle/p/show?id=2309404032347753310051>, accessed February 24, 2019.

the union with the committee, which, in fact, legalized the union. Fang Jiake has since served as the committee director. The special committee formally issued the Measures for Authenticating Long-term Care Institutions and authenticated nine institutions in 2015. In 2019, Hetong united the core institutions of the committee to organize the commercially registered China Long-term Care Group, which further expanded services across the country.

In addition to the serial forums, Hetong often held other forums, symposiums, and seminars. For example, it held China's first international forum on euthanasia in 2016 and two other forums on this issue in 2018 and 2023. Because Hetong directly provides services to seniors, it is familiar with their demands and the elderly care industry. It also conducted surveys and studies on seniors-related issues and published some books, pamphlets, and corpora of articles. Fang Jiake serves as a representative of Tianjin Municipal People's Congress. He submitted many policy proposals via this channel. For example, he submitted 26 proposals to the 2015 Tianjin Municipal People's Congress session, 17 of which were related to seniors. Some of Fang's policy initiatives were aggressive, e.g., he proposed the termination of the one-child policy and the legislation for implementing euthanasia.⁸¹ The former proposal was successful, while the latter failed. Currently, Hetong is still advocating for legislation for euthanasia.⁸² Ma Dan, deputy secretary-general of Hetong, is also a representative of Tianjin Municipal People's Congress. She submitted proposals via this channel every year. For example, in 2023, she proposed establishing a system to classify seniors according to their health conditions and provide corresponding services.⁸³ The case of Hetong again shows that cooperative professionals may have better opportunities to establish good relationships with the official system and have more policy influence.

⁸¹ Fang introduced his proposals in one of his blog articles, available at http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_8bae62b10102vbw4.html, accessed October 15, 2016.

⁸² See Hetong news at http://www.hetong.org.cn/htnews/htnews_15_3659.html, accessed May 11, 2023.

⁸³ See Hetong news at http://www.hetong.org.cn/htnews/htnews_15_3409.html, accessed May 11, 2023.

Founded by Wang Xiaoyan in 2006, Community Alliance was another organization adopting embedded pluralism. Unfortunately, this organization has ceased working since 2011 due to the health issues of its leader.⁸⁴ Because this organization served as another case of embedded pluralism in the field of seniors, this research still presents it. During its short existence, it launched a few surveys and field studies in different locations in China and tried to influence policies according to the results. For example, in 2007-2008, Community Alliance conducted a systematic study on the rights and interests of Beijing's seniors, including sample surveys and multiple panel discussions. To influence the revision of the Seniors' law, it submitted a research report and a series of policy proposals to the NWCAO. Some of its proposals were consistent with the new provisions in the revised law, e.g., the specification of spiritual support to senior people. For another example, it conducted another study on implementing policies regarding home-based elderly care services in 2009. Then, it held a symposium with the support of the MOCA and the NWCAO. Government officials, experts, and elderly care workers discussed relevant issues at the symposium. MOCA officials endorsed Community Alliance's proposal to encourage the participation of social organizations in providing those services. In the same year, the MOCA invited Wang Xiaoyan to be an expert member of the Professional Standards Technical Committee of the National Social Welfare, and Community Alliance joined the National Union for Long-term Care. In addition to managing specific elderly care projects, Community Alliance organized some voluntary lawyers to provide seniors with legal education and counseling. It also analyzed typical legal cases involving seniors to find their demands and relevant policy issues. Enrooting at the grassroots and actively representing seniors' interests are the commonalities of Hetong and Community Alliance.

⁸⁴ An interviewee of another organization provided this information. On June 15, 2012, the author made a brief phone call with Wang Xiaoyan, but she refused the interview. Materials of Community Alliance used in this research were collected from its website at www.communityalliance.org.cn, its blog at <http://blog.sina.com.cn/communityalliance>, and its microblog at https://www.weibo.com/u/1393858011?is_all=1. Its website has been closed since 2012. The latter two still existed in 2019 but have not updated information since 2011.

6.2.2.2 Silent Pluralism

Professor Xu Kun set up the Love Delivery Hotline at her home in 2006. This hotline aims to provide psychological assistance to empty nesters and solitary or ill seniors suffering from psychological crises. Since other experts joined the hotline and one well-known enterprise became its primary sponsor, the hotline has developed into a full-fledged organization in 2011 that provides online and offline services throughout the country. However, this organization consistently focuses on its original task of psychological crisis intervention and has never engaged in any policy activities. It shows no interest in collecting seniors' opinions on specific policies and influencing policies.

Beijing Hualing, formerly known as Cuncaochunhui, was also founded in 2006 by Yang Ping, another psychologist. This organization provides psychological counseling to a broader range of seniors and other people with psychiatric disabilities and their relatives. Sometimes, its volunteers also offer daily services like running errands for seniors. Like the Love Delivery Hotline, it never treated influencing policies as one of its organizational goals and made no efforts to represent the interests of seniors and influence relevant policies. Both organizations fall into the category of silent pluralism.

This chapter finds twenty-nine internet websites in the field of seniors, applying the criteria developed before. However, all these websites generally do not touch on policy issues. They mainly focus on senior people's daily lives, hobbies, and fellowship activities or promoting the culture of filial piety. Several of them have some information on existing policies instead of influencing policies. Neither are they involved in the rights protection of seniors despite widespread infringements on seniors' rights in China (Zhu and Walker 2018b, 21-22). Therefore, all these websites fall into the category of silent pluralism.

6.2.3 Summary of Organizations for Seniors

This section studies the policy influence of social organizations for seniors. Like the health field, government agencies, such as the MOCA, the NWCAO, and the MOH monopolize policymaking in the field of seniors. As a consequence, social organizations are relatively marginalized. Mass organizations, as well as active state corporatism, are missing in this field. The seemingly peak organization, the CNCA, is integrated with the NWCAO and merely plays a symbolic role. Eleven organizations affiliated with the NWCAO/the MOCA or the MOH facilitate policy implementation in different aspects and seldom engage in other policy stages and bring forward policy initiatives; therefore, they fall into the category of passive state corporatism. Senior elites within the official system created eight national organizations affiliated with other agencies/organizations. These organizations either focus on hobby/fellowship activities or provide professional services irrelevant to seniors. Because they neither seek to influence seniors-related policies nor serve as important policy implementation entities in the field, they fall into the category of symbolic state corporatism. A comparison of these two groups of organizations indicates that government agencies assuming major responsibilities in a field tend to make at least a part of their affiliated organizations play more substantial policy roles. On the contrary, government agencies not assuming major responsibilities in a field are inclined to make affiliated organizations in the field symbolic. This finding is consistent with common sense that major agencies in a field need more policy assistants. It is even more evident that the MOH started to strengthen three affiliated organizations after it became the leading agency in the field of seniors in 2018.

Regarding bottom-up organizations, only two of them—Hetong and Community Alliance—adopt(ed) embedded pluralism. Unfortunately, the latter has ceased working for a few years. Like the BCLARC in the minor's field, Hetong is another case showing cooperative

professionals may have better opportunities to establish good relationships with the state and exert more policy influence. The other two national organizations—Love Delivery Hotline and Beijing Hualing—concentrate on providing psychological counseling services and remain silent in the policy arena. All internet websites identified in the field of seniors also fall into silent pluralism. Similar to the field of minors, critical pluralism and reduced embedded pluralism are absent in this field. Likewise, no organizations in the senior’s field ever suffered from state oppression. Table 6.2 generalizes the categorization of the policy influence of organizations for seniors.

Table 6.2 Categorization of the Policy Influence of Organizations for Seniors

top-down organizations	active state corporatism	
	passive state corporatism	the CAGG, the CADF, the CAUA, the CSIA, the CASWSS, Hualing, Huashou, Zhongyi, the CAGR, the CAWA, the CALC
	symbolic state corporatism	the CNCA, eight organizations affiliated to other agencies or organizations
bottom-up organizations	embedded pluralism	Hetong, Community Alliance
	reduced embedded pluralism	
	critical pluralism	
	silent pluralism	Love Delivery Hotline, Beijing Hualing, 29 internet websites

6.3 Conclusion of Chapter Five and Chapter Six

This chapter and the last chapter explore the policy influence of social organizations for three conventional underprivileged groups—disabled persons, minors, and seniors. The previously developed framework has proved sufficiently valid in all three groups. No organization operates outside the six modes of policy influence defined in the framework.

Active state corporatism exists in the fields of disabled persons and minors. The overarching CDPF system monopolizes the top-down section in the former field, while the ACWF and the CCYL share the power of representation in the latter field. These mass organizations actively represent the interests of their constituencies and influence relevant policies, with common

limitations of bureaucratic features and prioritizing the state's interests. In the field of seniors, however, government agencies dominate and monopolize the policy process while mass organizations and active state corporatism are absent. Passive state corporatism is prevalent in all three fields. Meanwhile, a cluster of symbolic state corporatist organizations appears in the field of seniors. The same category is missing in the field of disabled persons, while only one such organization exists in the field of minors.

It is further verified that policy influence modes of state corporatist organizations stem from exterior authorization and empowerment. Without state authorization and empowerment, the CNCCC, a quasi-mass organization, only focuses on policy implementation, and the CNCA, a seemingly peak organization, is even marginalized into the category of symbolic state corporatism.

Policy influence modes of organizations affiliated with state corporatist organizations/government agencies also depend on the authorization and empowerment of their supervisory bodies. Organizations affiliated with active state corporatist organizations may be assigned any policy role. In the field of minors, organizations within the ACWF and the CCYL systems stretch to all three categories of top-down organizations. However, they are less likely to make affiliated organizations symbolic. Only one organization affiliated with the ACWF falls into this category. Organizations affiliated with passive state corporatist organizations can hardly be active policy advocates.

Furthermore, those organizations/agencies that assume major responsibilities to manage relevant affairs in their respective fields tend to assign more substantial functions to their affiliated organizations. In contrast, organizations/agencies not assuming major responsibilities in a field are inclined to make affiliated organizations symbolic. In the field of minors, the ACWF and the CCYL empower four organizations to participate actively in the whole policy process. These two mass

organizations, the CNCCC, the MOE, and the MOCA assume major responsibilities and assign most affiliated organizations to assist policy implementation. In the field of disabled persons, the CDPF also assigns 12 affiliated organizations and five special associations to implement policies. In the field of seniors, the MOCA, the NWCAO, and the MOH authorize eleven organizations to facilitate policy implementation, while organizations affiliated with other agencies/organizations not assuming major responsibilities play a symbolic role. Once the MOH became the major agency managing seniors-related affairs in 2018, it started strengthening the policy function of three initially affiliated organizations.

However, no organizations affiliated with government agencies have been found to fall into the category of active state corporatism thus far. Characterized by missing active state corporatism, less passive state corporatist organizations, and a cluster of symbolic state corporatist organizations, top-down organizations in the seniors' field have the lowest level of policy influence in the three groups discussed in these two chapters.

Embedded pluralism exists in all three fields. The cases of the BCLARC and Hetong show again that cooperative professionals may have better opportunities to establish good relationships with the state and have more policy influence. Reduced embedded pluralism, a subcategory of embedded pluralism, is found in five organizations in the field of disability, making a complete definition of this subcategory possible. However, it is not popular, given its absence in the fields of minors and seniors.

Beijing Huiling was the single case of critical pluralism across these three groups, which was related to its prominent leader to a large extent. To avoid further persecution and attract more resources, Meng Weina registered the Guangdong Huiling Foundation as the new headquarters and switched to embedded pluralism afterward. After its transformation, critical pluralism disappeared

in all these three fields.

Silent pluralism appears in all three fields, but this mode seems more popular in the fields of minors and seniors because this category encompasses most bottom-up organizations in these two fields. In addition, all internet websites of these three fields fall into the category of silent pluralism, which shows that informal organizations tend to remain silent in the policy arena.

Beijing Huiling was the only organization that suffered from state oppression in these three fields. This is consistent with the previous conclusion that the state is more inclined to repress organizations adopting critical pluralism. Nevertheless, no organizations ceased working in these three fields because of state oppression.

In these three fields, bottom-up organizations in the field of disability look more prosperous. In contrast, either the quantity or the policy influence of bottom-up organizations in the fields of minors and seniors is insufficient, considering the vast populations of these two groups. Because both top-down and bottom-up organizations in the seniors' field appear relatively uninfluential in the policy arena, senior people are the most underrepresented group studied in this research.

In the field of minors, no national-level organizations are started or run by minors themselves. Similarly, all bottom-up organizations for seniors at the national level are started or managed by middle-aged professionals instead of senior people. Therefore, comparing group-based and non-group-based organizations in these two fields is impossible. In the field of disability, these two kinds of organizations are present in embedded pluralism, reduced embedded pluralism, and silent pluralism, which further demonstrates that whether an organization is group-based is irrelevant to its mode/level of policy influence.

Chapter 7 TOP-DOWN ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

As discussed before, China's economic development has been at the cost of social inequality and environmental degradation. The previous chapters have studied six types of human service organizations working for six underprivileged groups. This chapter and the next chapter will cover environmental organizations. As many scholars and practitioners point out, Chinese people face such environmental challenges as air pollution, water scarcity and pollution, soil contamination, and land desertification, to name a few. On the one hand, the environment itself is undermined. On the other hand, human beings—either as individuals or as a whole—become victims of damaged environment (Ma and Schmitt, 2008; Hildebrandt and Turner 2009, 90-92; Chen 2009, 1-15; Economy, 2010, 2019, 152-160; Zhang and Barr 2013, 27-32; Holdaway, 2013; Fürst and Holdaway, 2015; Hsu, 2015; Wu and Edmonds, 2017; Shapiro, 2019; Huang 2020, 25-53). In this sense, both the environment and ubiquitous environmental victims in China are constituencies of environmental organizations.

7.1 Introduction of Chinese Environmental Organizations and the Political Context

Although almost all environmental organizations do not have a long history, many researchers and practitioners traditionally treat them as the vanguard of emerging Chinese civil society (Hildebrandt and Turner 2009, 89; Percival and Zhao 2013, 146; Dai and Spires 2017, 63). Those well-known organizations, such as Friends of Nature (FON), Green Earth Volunteers (GEV), and Global Village of Beijing (GVB), have served as symbols of Chinese NGOs. Their founders, such as Liang Congjie, Wang Yongchen, and Liao Xiaoyi, are famous social entrepreneurs in China as well as the international community (Yang 2005, 60-61; Xie 2009, 89; Xie 2011, 212-213; Aikawa 2017, 182). Most importantly, many of these organizations started to influence public

policies since the late 1990s, and successfully launched a few public events, including the protection of Tibetan antelope, Yunnan snub-nosed monkey, and Yangtze river dolphin, the Nu River anti-dam activism, the 26°C (78.8°F) Air Conditioning Energy-saving Campaign, the intervention in the project of Jingmi Diversion Canal, the Yuanmingyuan Lakebed Anti-seepage Project, the project of KunYu River, and the plan of relocating the Beijing Zoo (Ru, 2004; Yang 2005, 63-64; Moore and Warren 2006, 8-10; Sun and Zhao 2007, 127-132; Xie 2009, 90-91; Bao 2009, 9; Johnson 2009, 68-70, 114-122; Zhao 2010, 97-101; Zhan and Tang 2013, 390-391; Fei 2015, 88, 92-93; Aikawa 2017, 184; Shapiro 2019, 122-124; Xu 2020, 162-173). More environmental organizations were established, and more cases of influencing policies emerged over time. Are they all active in influencing policies? Do these organizations adopt the same mode to influence policies? Existing research suggests positive answers to these questions. Some scholars find these organizations take an antagonistic and aggressive approach to influence policies (Mertha, 2008; Lit, 2018), while more argue they embrace a nonconfrontational and cooperative approach (Tang and Zhan, 2008; Ho, 2008a, 2008b; Hatch, 2014). Zhang and Barr (2013,91-106) create an eclectic conception of “conformist rebels,” i.e., these organizations avoid confrontations with the government but are not shy in bringing forward contentious issues and are firm in demanding responses. However, as this chapter and the next chapter will disclose, these answers turn out to be one-sided because they all view environmental organizations as monolithic. Variations exist in environmental organizations. In fact, those organizations with which many researchers and practitioners are familiar may take different modes to influence policies. Those adopting embedded pluralism embrace a nonconfrontational and collaborative approach, while those adopting critical pluralism are more contentious and even aggressive. Furthermore, many environmental organizations do not take action to influence policies.

Of the seven types of social organizations studied in this research, the field of environment encompasses the largest number of organizations. Like other fields of social organizations, both top-down and bottom-up organizations exist in this field. Nevertheless, policy influence and interest representation of top-down environmental organizations remain under-researched. In scarce studies on the topic, Wu's (2003, 42) insight into the difference between GONGOs' capacity to influence policy outcomes independently and to implement governmental policies through existing administrative systems is especially inspiring. It is roughly consistent with the distinction between active state corporatism and passive state corporatism in this research. This research finds that a limited number of top-down organizations in the field of environment are active policy advocates that have played essential roles in representing their constituencies and influencing policies in their specific jurisdictions or the general public. In contrast, most of their peer organizations only play passive or symbolic roles. This chapter will study top-down environmental organizations, while the next chapter will cover bottom-up environmental organizations. These two chapters will produce a panoramic picture of the policy influence of Chinese environmental organizations. Because of limited space, some typical organizations will be investigated more closely than others, while many organizations sharing certain characteristics will be studied as clusters.

Mass organizations do not exist in the field of environment; therefore, this is another field in which government organs dominate the policy process. The most crucial government agency taking charge of environmental protection is the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP)¹. In

¹ This agency was independently established in 1988 under the name of State Environmental Protection Administration. In 1998, it was upgraded to the General Administration of Environmental Protection. Ten years later, it was further upgraded to the Ministry of Environmental Protection. In March 2018, it was renamed the Ministry of Ecology and Environment after integrating some functions of a few other ministries (Ding 2020, 89). The upward trajectory of the agency reflects the state's increasing attention to environmental protection. The MEP is used in this research to designate the agency in all its historical stages for convenience.

addition, some other agencies also take charge of environment-related affairs in their respective jurisdictions, including but not limited to the NDRC, the State Forestry Administration (SFA), the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), the Ministry of Water Resources, the State Oceanic Administration², and the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development (MOHURD) (Zhang et al. 2016, 332). In addition, the NPC's Environment Protection and Resources Conservation Committee is a critical legislative organ in this field, and the Committee of Population, Resources, and Environment in the CPPCC acts as a consultative organ to make environmental policies. In March 2018, the MEP was renamed the Ministry of Ecology and Environment and incorporated some environment-related functions of a few other ministries, such as climate change, agricultural pollution, and marine conservation (Goron 2018, 41; Kostka and Zhang 2018, 772-773; Economy 2019, 184). In 2019, the CCP Central Committee and the State Council promulgated the Regulations on Central Inspection Work of Ecological and Environmental Protection. According to this document, a central leading group of ecological and environmental protection inspection was established, with its office located in the MEP. The MEP's expanded jurisdiction and strengthened inspection power reflect the state's increasing attention to environmental protection. In March 2018, the SFA was renamed the National Forestry and Grassland Administration after integrating some functions of a few other ministries. In addition, it has incorporated the new National Park Administration and taken over the management of all conservation areas since then. These enlarged jurisdictions have made the SFA another major environment-related agency.³

Although many top-down organizations exist in the field of environment, they can be

² In March 2018, it was incorporated into the Ministry of Natural Resources, a reorganized ministry based on the former Ministry of Land and Resources. The MEP incorporated its function of environmental protection.

³ For convenience, the SFA is used in this research to designate the agency in all its historical stages.

classified into two groups according to their supervisory bodies. One group has government agencies as their supervisory bodies, i.e., they are affiliated with government agencies. Supervisory bodies of the other group are other institutions. In this research, if an organization claims that it receives directions from a government agency regularly, as usually stipulated in its constitution or self-introduction, this organization is considered in affiliation with the government agency, no matter whether the agency is its official sponsoring unit. As will be shown later, this differentiation is significant because these two groups of environmental organizations fall into different policy influence modes. It must be pointed out that the Chinese government has required many social organizations officially affiliated with agencies to gradually separate from their sponsoring units since 2017. However, this process turned out to be slow and nominal to a large extent. Most organizations still receive directions from their former sponsoring units. According to the abovementioned criterion, they are still considered affiliated with these agencies.

As disclosed in previous chapters, the current Party-state leadership is more politically conservative and skeptical of civil society than its predecessors were in the reform era. Many active organizations have been forced to shut down or remain inactive, while some organizations have switched to other modes of policy influence in response to this institutional change. Have environmental organizations also been seriously impacted in this more restrictive political context? The findings of this chapter and the next chapter surprisingly provide a negative answer. From the central government's perspective, public anger over inequality, corruption, and pollution is so intense that it is understood as a threat to the regime (Shapiro 2019, 56). Various problems caused by environmental degradation threaten sociopolitical stability by fueling widespread dissatisfaction and frustration among the populace, a breeding ground for mass protests directed at the state (Huang 2020, 186). In response, the current leadership has continuously stressed

environmental protection, creating a relatively tolerant atmosphere for environmental organizations (Shapiro 2019, 120-121; Wu and Martus 2021, 500-501). Chinese environmental organizations are now assuming advocacy roles similar to those adopted by environmental organizations in other parts of the world, which represents a maturing of environmental activism and indicates the increased confidence and willingness of these organizations to take on politically difficult issues (Shapiro 2019, 120).

Xi Jinping is a rare top leader of the Party-state who highly emphasizes environmental protection. As early as 2005, when he served as Party Secretary of Zhejiang Province, he created the theory that “clear waters and green mountains are as valuable as mountains of gold and silver (*lǚshuǐ qīngshān jiù shì jīnshān yīnshān*),” which argues the unity of economic development and environmental protection (Goron 2018, 43; Li and Shapiro 2020, 6; Huang 2020, 103; Ding 2022, 50; Arantes 2024, 75). Since he rose to power in 2012, he has accentuated this theory on various occasions, and his administration has treated environmental protection as one of its strongholds to gain ground (Economy 2019, 162-163; Arantes, 2024). “Constructing eco-civilization” and “building a beautiful China” were brought forward in the 18th CCP National Congress report in November 2012 (Zhang et al. 2016, 328-329; Marinelli 2018, 375-379). In 2015, Xi’s theory was included in Opinions on Accelerating the Ecological Civilization Construction and Integrated Reform Plan for Promoting Ecological Progress promulgated by the CCP Central Committee and the State Council (Goron 2018, 41). Since this year, the Xi Jinping administration has carried out the Central Environmental Inspection campaign to improve local environmental enforcement (Chen et al., 2023). In 2017, Xi’s theory was further incorporated into the 19th CCP National Congress report as a guiding principle (Huang 2020, 108), and the revised CCP Constitution included ecological civilization for the first time (Shen 2022, 359). In March 2018, the revised

Constitution of the PRC included ecological civilization for the first time (Goron 2018, 41; Li and Shapiro 2020, 6; Shen 2022). Xi Jinping systematically presented his Thoughts on Ecological Civilization two months later at the National Conference on Ecological Environment Protection. In June, his Thoughts were officially confirmed in the Opinions of the Central Committee of the CCP and the State Council on Comprehensively Strengthening the Protection of the Ecological Environment and Firmly Winning the Battle of Preventing and Controlling Environmental Pollution. In the same year, the NPC revised a series of laws to realize his Thoughts, including the Law on Environment Impact Assessment, the Law on Environmental Protection Tax, the Law on the Prevention and Control of Desertification, the Circular Economy Promotion Law, and the Energy Conservation Law. The Civil Code adopted in 2020 also includes the “green” principle and many “green” articles. In 2022, Xi Jinping affirmed that harmonious coexistence between humans and nature was one of the characteristics of Chinese modernization in his 20th CCP National Congress report (Arantes 2024, 68). Both top-down and bottom-up environmental organizations have made remarkable achievements in this eco-friendly context.

7.2 Active State Corporatism

As previous chapters demonstrate, active state corporatism exists either in mass organizations or some organizations affiliated with mass organizations. In contrast, organizations affiliated with government agencies usually fall into the categories of passive state corporatism or symbolic state corporatism. This argument remains valid by and large in environmental organizations. However, three top-down organizations—All China Environment Federation (ACEF), the China Ecological Civilization Research and Promotion Association (CEC) affiliated with the MEP, and the Chinese Society of Forestry (CSF) affiliated with the SFA—have been empowered by their respective supervisory agencies to participate in the policy process actively;

therefore, they fall into the category of active state corporatism. The ACEF is the largest environmental organization in China (Fei 2015, 93) and has played an essential role in influencing environmental policies.

7.2.1 Policy Influence of the ACEF

As more and more environmental victims and conflicts emerged, the MEP planned to establish an organization to protect the public's environmental rights. Zeng Xiaodong, a former vice-ministry-level official of the MEP, organized the ACEF in 2005 and acted as its vice-president and secretary-general until he passed away in 2014. Incorporating many government officials, experts, and activists from various environment-related sectors into its board or regular membership, the ACEF serves as a platform for interdepartmental and multilevel communication (Bao 2009, 13). Since its establishment, the MEP has authorized the ACEF to submit policy proposals to the government and provide legal protection for the public's environmental rights, as stated in the organization's constitution. To perform these functions, the ACEF created the Center for the Protection of Environmental Rights and a matching special fund and recruited specialized staff led by Lü Keqin and Ma Yong⁴. It also invited 30 renowned experts in law, environment, and economics to form a legal experts' committee for consultation. Furthermore, the ACEF organized more than 150 voluntary law firms and more than 700 voluntary lawyers throughout the country to establish the Alliance of Outstanding Voluntary Lawyers and provided regular training. This external force plays a vital role in accomplishing its legal mission.

According to Ma Yong⁵, the ACEF had intervened in 564 environmental cases and successfully settled 301 by the end of 2011. Litigations appeared in 50 cases, and the ACEF won more than 80% of them. By the end of 2016, the ACEF had intervened in nearly one thousand

⁴ As mentioned later in this chapter, they left the ACEF after it changed leadership.

⁵ The author's interview with Ma Yong, then director of the Department of Litigation and Supervision under the Center for the Protection of Environmental Rights, on July 16, 2012, in Beijing.

environmental cases, 80 of which involved legal aid.⁶ The ACEF mainly applies four methods to deal with these cases. The most common measure is what is called social supervision, a comprehensive method including sending lawyer's letters to polluters, sending suggestion letters to relevant local government agencies, sending internal references to higher leadership, and exposing those cases to the public through the media (Percival and Zhao 2013, 170-171). The second method is to mediate environmental disputes. The third one is providing legal aid to environmental victims, including consultation, litigation support, lobbying, and applying for administrative reconsideration. The last measure is to file Environmental Public Interest Litigations (EPILs), an initially rare practice that has recently been used more frequently and become a crucial sign of progress in environmental protection.⁷

EPIL concerns litigation by claimants, who have not suffered loss themselves, claiming compensation and other remedies in the name of "public interest" (*gongyi*) (Xie and Xu 2022, 55). In these litigations, the plaintiff is not self-serving but acts for the public interest (Cao and Wang 2011, 219). In 2009, the ACEF filed two lawsuits against Jiangyin Port Container CO., Ltd. in Jiangsu Province and Qingzhen Bureau of State Land and Resources in Guizhou Province, which were the first civil EPIL and the first administrative EPIL filed by an environmental organization in China, respectively (Cao and Wang 2011, 232-234; Wilson 2012, 871; Qie 2014, 96; Balme 2014, 182). In 2010, the ACEF and Guiyang Environmental Education Center v. Dingba Paper Mill became the first EPIL environmental organizations won (Fürst 2016, 222-226; Zhai and Chang 2018, 374). The most prominent EPIL in 2011 was the ACEF v. Environmental Protection Bureau of Xiuwen County in Guizhou Province, in which the disclosure of environmental information served as the core claim for the first time. The ACEF filed the first EPIL involving

⁶ ACEF news, <http://www.acef.com.cn/news/lhhd/2016/1205/19161.html>, accessed April 12, 2017.

⁷ The author's interview with Ma Yong.

ecological damages in 2012 and the first EPIL involving air pollution in 2015, eventually winning both cases. By the end of 2020, the ACEF had filed 73 EPILs⁸, five of which were included in typical cases promulgated by the Supreme People's Court. Furthermore, a few institutional innovations were created in these cases, such as litigation support from procuratorates or environmental protection agencies, introducing environmental experts into trial activities as people's assessors, off-site compensation for ecological damages, and applying for funds from non-profit foundations (Percival and Zhao 2013, 171). As the pioneer to practice EPILs, the ACEF made history in China's environmental protection.

The ACEF not only deals with individual cases but seeks to influence policies based on its practice. In so doing, the ACEF also articulates the interests of environmental victims. According to Ma Yong, the ACEF regularly analyzes information collected from its business of legal protection and sends suggestions or policy proposals to local legislative, administrative, or judicial authorities.⁹ Compiling thousands of cases from both its own practice and other sources, the ACEF has established a comprehensive database of environmental cases, which it uses to conduct theoretical and practical studies. Receiving a request from relevant authorities in 2013, for example, it submitted 1,860 criminal cases from the database as a reference to enact the Interpretation on Several Issues concerning the Application of Law in the Handling of Criminal Cases of Environmental Pollution¹⁰, promulgated by the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate in June 2013 and revised in December 2016.

Most importantly, the ACEF has actively advocated for constructing a legal environmental governance system. One of its efforts is to hold summit forums. With the support of the MEP, it

⁸ See online news of Legal Daily, available at http://www.legaldaily.com.cn/legal_case/content/2021-01/11/content_8403900.html, accessed May 14, 2023.

⁹ The author's interview with Ma Yong on July 16, 2012, in Beijing.

¹⁰ The ACEF's 2013 yearly review of its work of environmental rights protection, <http://www.acef.com.cn/zhuantilanmu/2013hjwqtbh/huiyinarong/2014/0228/12457.html>, accessed April 12, 2017.

had held 14 Forums on Environment and Development in China by 2020. Each forum invited high-ranking government officials, international institutions, environmental experts, environmental organizations, environmental enterprises, and the media. Top media outlets published some important forum papers. After each forum, the ACEF published collections of forum essays and compiled and submitted policy proposals to environmental authorities. The outcomes of these forums have impacted China's environmental policies to some extent. For instance, the proposal of strengthening environmental legal aid and exploring EPILs was included in the Decision of the State Council on Implementing Scientific Outlook on Development and Strengthening Environmental Protection in 2005, which served as the primary policy base for the ACEF's legal actions before 2012. From 2011 to 2014, the ACEF held four sessions of the Environmental Justice Forum. In addition to environmental and legal experts, the ACEF invited the NPC, the MEP, the Supreme People's Court, and many local courts. Focusing on the role of judiciary organs in environmental protection, these sessions promoted the establishment and operation of Environmental Courts and the exploration and institutionalization of EPILs. Since the first Environmental Court was created in Guizhou Province in 2007 (Cao and Wang 2011, 219; Wang 2017, 42; Zhai and Chang 2018, 371), 2,149 Environmental Courts had been established across the country by the end of 2021.¹¹ In July 2014, the Supreme People's Court set up an Environmental Court for the first time (Wang 2016, 615; Wang 2017, 42; Zhai and Chang 2018, 374). Shortly after its establishment, its tribunal director visited the ACEF and acknowledged its efforts. In addition to these summit forums, the ACEF has held or attended numerous forums, symposiums, and conferences to discuss specific environmental issues.

Another effort is to conduct research projects and influence legislation based on these

¹¹ See p.2 of the Development Report of China's Environmental Justice (2021) the Supreme People's Court issued in June 2022. Its text is available at <https://www.court.gov.cn/zixun-xiangqing-361301.html>, accessed May 14, 2023.

projects. For example, cooperating with the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), a U.S.-based environmental NGO, the ACEF conducted the Project of Promoting Environmental Protection through Judicial Means from 2010 to 2011. In January 2011, it held a symposium to discuss the resulting report focusing on Environmental Courts and EPILs. In May, it held another special symposium to discuss including EPILs in the Civil Procedure Law, which was in the revising process. These symposiums served as lobbying channels by inviting legal experts, judges, and NPC and MEP officials. For another example, in April 2011, the ACEF launched the Project of Protecting Environmental Rights of the Public and Enhancing the Establishment of the EPIL System, funded by the United Nations Development Programme. One of the project's primary goals was to draft proposals for establishing the EPIL System and enacting an Environmental Damage Compensation Law. In 2011, the ACEF submitted a proposal regarding establishing the EPIL System to the CPPCC and three proposals regarding revising the Civil Procedure Law, the Criminal Procedure Law, and the Environmental Protection Law to the NPC and the MEP. As a response, the NPC invited the ACEF to attend some of its meetings about revising the Civil Procedure Law. At those meetings, the ACEF gave particular addresses on EPILs.¹² In April 2012, the ACEF and Vermont Law School started the Project on the Role and Functions of Procuratorates in EPILs. Before they finished the research report, the ACEF submitted a relevant policy proposal to the NPC in July to influence the ongoing revision of the Civil Procedure Law. On August 31, 2012, the NPC adopted the new Civil Procedure Law, to which Article 55 was added. According to this article, authorities or relevant organizations, as prescribed by law, may institute court actions against conduct polluting the environment or damaging the public interest. It was the first time a Chinese law prescribes Public Interest Litigation (Qie 2014, 95-96; Wang 2016, 618; Wang 2017,

¹² The author's interview with Ma Yong on July 16, 2012, in Beijing.

28-29; Zhai and Chang 2018, 373, 375; Ma and Xiang 2023, 471; You et al. 2023, 3).

The ACEF's participation in the revision of the Environmental Protection Law serves as the most typical example of its mode of policy influence.

The ACEF and the Revision of the Environmental Protection Law

The Environmental Protection Law was put into trial implementation in 1979 and revised and formally implemented in 1989. Because it had become outdated with economic development and environmental deterioration, more and more experts, organizations, NPC representatives, and CPPCC members called for another revision of the law (Zhang et al. 2013, 1029-1030; Wang 2017, 25-27; Naito 2017, 14; Froissart 2019, 213). Since its founding, the ACEF joined the force to lobby for the revision. From 2005 to 2012, the ACEF sent 18 suggestion letters to relevant authorities and submitted six proposals to the NPC and 12 to the CPPCC. Multiple environmental issues, mainly the revision of the law, were covered in these documents.¹³ In January 2011, the NPC put the revision of the law on its legislative agenda and designated the MEP to draft the revisions (Wang 2017, 27).

After winning the first EPIL at the end of 2010, the ACEF submitted a report to the MEP in January 2011, which received written direction from the MEP's top leadership. Based on the direction, the MEP invited the Supreme People's Court, the Legislative Affairs Office of the State Council, and the First Intermediate Court of Beijing to form a policy document that confirmed the exploration of EPILs and suggested including EPILs in the revision of existing laws. When drafting revisions to the Environmental Protection Law, the MEP invited the ACEF to attend policy

¹³ The author's interview with Ma Yong on July 16, 2012, in Beijing, and a work review on the ACEF's website, <http://www.acef.com.cn/envlaw/hjwqxc/2013/1213/156.html>, accessed November 15, 2016.

meetings and elaborate its proposals.¹⁴ In 2011, the ACEF launched a campaign to collect the opinions of experts, judges, and lawyers on the revision of the Environmental Protection Law. In March 2011 and February 2012, the ACEF held two special symposiums to discuss the MEP's draft. According to the outcomes of these activities, the ACEF sent a comprehensive suggestion letter to the MEP and the NPC.

The NPC's Environment Protection and Resources Conservation Committee received the MEP's draft in 2011 and started its own revision process. In August 2012, the NPC deliberated on its revised draft for the first time and publicized it on its website to solicit public opinions. However, despite the efforts of all sides, the draft surprised everyone by making only minor revisions to the old law and eliminating many articles from the MEP's draft, including EPILs (Wang 2017, 28; Qiaoan 2022, 1, 87). According to Zhang et al. (2013, 1032-1033), Zhang et al. (2016, 327), and Froissart (2019, 214-215), the NDRC and other authorities in charge of industrial development gained the upper hand in the formation of this draft. Consequently, the NPC's draft was inundated with criticism (Zhang et al. 2013, 1032; Wang 2017, 32). In September, fourteen environmental jurists sent a letter to Wu Bangguo, then chairman of the standing committee of the NPC, expressing their dissatisfaction with the draft (Qie 2014, 101-103; Froissart 2019, 215). At the same time, ACEF also attacked the draft and insisted on incorporating EPILs into the law at a symposium held by the MEP. In October, the MEP unusually publicized its position paper, in which it opposed the NPC's draft and specified 34 suggestions (Zhang et al. 2013, 1033; Qie 2014, 98-101; Zhang et al. 2016, 328; Froissart 2019, 215; Economy 2019, 169-170; Qiaoan 2022, 87). Thus, the NPC failed to vote on the draft and continued to revise the law.

In 2013, the ACEF encountered difficulties in practicing EPILs. Courts refused to accept

¹⁴ The author's interview with Ma Yong on July 16, 2012, in Beijing.

all eight EPILs the ACEF filed (Zhai and Chang 2018, 376; Shapiro 2019, 137). The ACEF responded by further promoting legislative breakthroughs. In April and May, it held two symposiums to discuss the revision of the Environmental Protection Law and the enactment of a judicial interpretation of civil EPILs. It also conducted field research on the role and functions of environmental organizations in EPILs and submitted the resulting research report to the NPC and the MEP, including proposals for implementing Article 55 of the revised Civil Procedure Law and revising the Environmental Protection Law. In June 2013, the ACEF held a conference of the Chinese Media Alliance of Environmental Protection, a loose alliance the ACEF organized in 2012, to amplify its voice. After the conference, some national media outlets reported the difficulties the ACEF had met in practicing EPILs, exposing the issue to the public.

In the meantime, positive changes were taking place at the top. The new Party-state leadership that eventually took office in March 2013 attached more importance to environmental protection than its predecessors did. Xi Jinping highly emphasized environmental protection in his addresses. The changing atmosphere made Zhang Dejiang demand high-quality revision of the Environmental Protection Law¹⁵ shortly after he took over as chairman of the standing committee of the NPC from Wu Bangguo in March 2013. Inside the NPC, the new Legal Committee took over the law's revision from the Environment Protection and Resources Conservation Committee and reorganized the drafting team (Zhang et al. 2013, 1034; Wang 2017, 32; Froissart 2019, 215). At the end of June 2013, the NPC deliberated on the draft for the second time. Compared with the previous draft, this version of the draft made significant breakthroughs: it confirmed environmental protection as a basic state policy of China; it strengthened government responsibilities and instituted some new measures, such as penalties by the day and cross-regional protection; it created

¹⁵ ACEF news, <http://www.acef.com.cn/envlaw/news/2013/0709/2528.html>, accessed November 15, 2016.

a whole individual chapter regarding the disclosure of environmental information and public participation; it also instituted EPIL for the first time (Dai 2019, 32). However, it only prescribed the ACEF and its provincial branches as qualified entities to file EPILs (Zhang et al. 2013, 1034; Zhang et al. 2016, 328; Wang 2017, 32-34). This article invited intensive criticisms, including those from other environmental organizations such as the FON and Nature University (Percival and Zhao 2013, 172; Zhu and Wu 2017, 406, 409-410; Naito 2017, 18; Froissart 2019, 216; Qiaoan 2022, 87). As a response, Zeng Xiaodong demonstrated to a reporter from Xinhua News Agency that the ACEF did not operate behind the scenes and was willing to unite more environmental organizations to engage in EPILs.¹⁶ Considering these criticisms, the NPC did not vote on the second draft and publicized it on its website again to solicit public opinion, a rare action in the NPC's operation (Zhu and Wu 2017, 395).

In October 2013, the NPC publicized a third draft, which expanded the range of qualified subjects to file EPILs to all national-level environmental organizations registered with the MOCA (Naito 2017, 17; Qiaoan 2022, 87). Nevertheless, many environmental organizations and some experts were still dissatisfied with the draft and demanded further revision. The ACEF rallied with other environmental organizations to oppose this draft because its local subsidiaries were also excluded from filing EPILs according to this draft (Froissart 2019, 216). Furthermore, the Third Plenary Session of the 18th CCP Central Committee held in November 2013 put forward higher requirements for environmental protection. Consequently, the NPC decided to revise the draft again (Wang 2017, 35). It released this third draft to the public without soliciting public comments. However, various stakeholders submitted their opinions and suggestions to the NPC, and the NPC held symposiums to discuss relevant issues (Zhu and Wu 2017, 395; Froissart 2019, 216). In April

¹⁶ See a news report at <http://news.sina.com.cn/c/2013-06-30/172127537524.shtml>, accessed November 16, 2016.

2014, the NPC eventually adopted the final version of the Environmental Protection Law, which would take effect on January 1, 2015. Although some highly expected items, such as citizens' environmental rights and enlarged environmental damage compensation, are still absent from the law, the final version preserved most improvements in the second and third drafts (Shapiro 2019, 69-70; Economy 2019, 170-171). The controversial qualification for filing EPILs is adjusted to "social organizations with clean records that undertake environmental protection for at least five consecutive years and register with MOCA offices located in cities with districts (Wang 2017, 36; Naito 2017, 16; Zhai and Chang 2018, 376; Dai 2019, 32; Froissart 2019, 214, 216; Gao and Whittaker 2019, 343; Xu 2020, 13; Qiaoan 2022, 2, 88; Xie and Xu 2022, 55; Ma and Xiang 2023, 472)." Accordingly, over 700 environmental organizations are qualified to file EPILs, including many bottom-up organizations (Zhang et al. 2016, 331; Shapiro 2019, 138; Economy 2019, 171; Huang 2020, 169; Qiaoan 2022, 88).

The ACEF was not satisfied with the general provisions of EPILs in the Civil Procedure Law and the Environmental Protection Law. Realizing detailed operative regulations are more important in practice, it started to lobby for a judicial interpretation of civil EPILs in 2013. Based on its legal practice and theoretical studies, the ACEF submitted multiple proposals with supporting materials to the Supreme People's Court. In January 2015, the Supreme People's Court promulgated the Interpretation on Several Issues concerning the Application of Law in the Conduct of Environmental Civil Public Interest Litigations (Wang 2016, 618; You et al. 2023, 4). On January 19, the ACEF received a letter from the Supreme People's Court, in which the court acknowledged the ACEF's suggestions for the judicial interpretation and efforts to promote

environmental justice.¹⁷ In the following years, the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate promulgated a series of judicial documents and guiding cases regarding EPILs, including administrative and criminal EPILs, marking the fundamental establishment of the EPIL system (Zhai and Chang 2018, 371-372, 377-378; Gao and Whittaker 2019, 332; You et al. 2023, 4-5).

After implementing the Environmental Protection Law and this judicial interpretation, the ACEF filed eight new EPILs in 2015. In contrast to 2013, different courts accepted all these cases. From 2015 to 2020, it filed 50 EPILs, of which the court rejected only one.¹⁸ EPILs in the entire country also increased. In 2015 and 2016, courts in 21 province-level administrative regions accepted 112 EPILs filed by qualified social organizations, in contrast to eight cases per year on average before 2015.¹⁹ In 2021, the number dramatically increased to 299.²⁰ Generally speaking, although the ACEF was not the only contributor to the significant progress in constructing a legal system of environmental governance, it played an irreplaceable role in the process, especially in establishing the EPIL system. Based on its practice in filing new EPILs, the ACEF still often submits proposals for improving the EPIL system to multiple authorities.

In addition to advocating for the EPIL system, the ACEF has made efforts to establish legal institutions for environmental damage compensation. In 2010, it submitted a proposal to the NPC for enacting the Environmental Damage Compensation Law. It included this topic in its projects and symposiums and submitted multiple proposals to the NPC or the CPPCC in the following years. The Central Leading Group for Comprehensively Deepening Reform, an

¹⁷ ACEF news, <http://www.acef.com.cn/news/lhhd/2015/0126/17812.html>, accessed November 16, 2016.

¹⁸ See online news of Legal Daily, available at http://www.legaldaily.com.cn/legal_case/content/2021-01/11/content_8403900.html, accessed May 14, 2023.

¹⁹ ACEF news, <http://www.acef.com.cn/news/lhhd/2017/1211/19660.html>, accessed July 22, 2019.

²⁰ See p.5 of the white paper titled China Environmental Resources Trials (2021) issued by the Supreme People's Court in June 2022. Its text is available at <https://www.court.gov.cn/zixun-xiangqing-361291.html>, accessed May 14, 2023.

institution within the CCP Central Committee established in 2013 and led by Xi Jinping, approved pilot schemes in seven provinces in August 2016 and decided to extend the experimented system to the entire country in 2018 (Xie and Xu 2022, 56). In 2019, the Supreme People's Court promulgated a judicial interpretation to regulate relevant trials. Based on the results of the practice, the Civil Code includes ecological environmental damage compensation in 2020 (You et al. 2023,5). In 2021, the ACEF submitted a proposal to the CPPCC suggesting the improvement of legal institutions for environmental damage compensation. The following year, the MEP and 13 other agencies jointly issued the Provisions on Compensation for Ecological and Environmental Damage, stipulating specific procedures. The ACEF partially realized its original objective. Although there is no national legislation, legal institutions for environmental damage compensation have been established.

Other policy actions of the ACEF include preventing and controlling air and water pollution, protecting wetlands, wildlife conservation, and promoting green communities and sustainable consumption. Since the MEP changed the leadership of the ACEF in 2016, the ACEF established a few special committees by recruiting external experts, such as special committees for technological standards of environmental protection, monitoring and control of motor vehicle pollution, waste power generation, and green finance. In addition, it organized the Alliance of Environmentally Friendly Enterprises and the Alliance of Third-party Treatment of Environmental Pollution. Strengthening relationships with experts and enterprises, the ACEF aims to influence more technical environmental policies and industrial standards.

The ACEF also actively collects and articulates the opinions of its constituencies and tries to influence policies based on these opinions. To facilitate its daily business of dealing with environmental cases, the ACEF set up a hotline and an online portal for environmental complaints

shortly after its founding. In March 2015, it further created a website (<http://www.wurantousu.com/>) to collect environmental complaints. In addition, field investigations and surveys, either in processing cases or in conducting projects, have become a part of its routine work. In so doing, the ACEF connects with the grassroots and finds critical policy issues. Occasionally, it launched large-scale campaigns to collect opinions on essential policies. For example, the ACEF launched a campaign in 2005 to solicit public opinions on the eleventh “five-year plan” for environmental protection. Based on responses from more than four million people, the ACEF formed a long survey report and submitted it to relevant authorities, which received comments from the minister of the MEP and a vice premier (Bao 2009, 10). In the final version of the eleventh “five-year plan,” some data from this survey were cited, and many proposals of the ACEF were adopted.²¹

One of the ACEF’s primary goals is to unite other environmental organizations. Many environmental organizations or individual activists have held the ACEF’s memberships since its founding. The ACEF cooperated with some bottom-up environmental organizations to conduct policy activities, such as the 26°C Air Conditioning Energy-saving Campaign and the “anti-excessive packaging” campaign. It has maintained close relationships with the FON in dealing with EPILs and with the Center for Legal Assistance to Pollution Victims (CLAPV) in providing legal aid.²² In 2006 and 2008, the ACEF conducted two nationwide surveys of environmental organizations and published the first overview report of Chinese environmental organizations. From 2006 to 2020, the ACEF held 13 Annual Conference of Chinese Environmental Organizations on Sustainable Development. These conferences served as a platform for bottom-up environmental organizations to interact with government officials and an incubator of policy

²¹ The author’s interview with Ma Yong on July 16, 2012, in Beijing.

²² Ibid.

proposals and joint actions (Hatch 2014, 52). For example, more than 200 environmental organizations proposed establishing a national waste sorting system when they discussed the thirteenth “five-year plan” for environmental protection at the conference in January 2015. As a result, the ACEF submitted a report to the MOHURD. After soliciting opinions on a draft in 2016, this ministry and the NDRC promulgated the Implementation Plan for the System of Household Waste Sorting in March 2017. Based on experimental implementation of the system in 46 cities, all Chinese cities at or above the prefectural level have started to implement the system since 2019.²³

However, like other active state corporatist organizations, the ACEF’s interest representation has limitations. Serving the state’s interests is also its priority. Therefore, the ACEF tends to avoid touching politically sensitive events, such as anti-PX project movements in Xiamen, Dalian, Kunming, and Maoming, anti-incinerator campaigns in Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou, and other environment-related mass incidents (*qunti shijian*) occurred in Ningbo, Shifang, Qidong, Hangzhou, Daqing, Wuhan, and many cities in Guangdong Province (Lang and Xu, 2013; Hung, 2013; Johnson, 2013; Wu and Peng, 2014; Lee and Ho, 2014; Steinhardt and Wu, 2015; Gunter, 2015; Liu et al., 2016; Wong, 2016a and 2016b; Lu and Chan, 2016; Johnson, 2016; Zhu, 2017; Bondes and Johnson, 2017; Wu and Edmonds 2017, 113-114; Tang, 2018a, 2018b; Zhang, 2018; Bondes, 2019; Hensengerth and Lu, 2019; Shapiro 2019, 52-56, 138-143, 156-159; Li, 2019; Economy 2019, 160-161; Huang and Sun, 2020; Huang and Yang, 2020; Meng and Wu, 2020; Hsu and Wang, 2021; Zhang, 2021). It also hesitated to involve itself in sensitive environmental cases. For example, the ACEF conducted some investigations of children’s blood lead poisoning appeared in various places. However, it did not proceed to file lawsuits or provide legal aid. One

²³ See CEC news at http://www.cecrpa.org.cn/sxyw/yw/201906/t20190605_705634.shtml, accessed July 29, 2019.

of its organizational goals is to facilitate the state's environmental communication in international society.²⁴ The ACEF has recently been involved in more international activities to facilitate the state's strategy. For example, it held a high-level international roundtable in 2020 to promote environmental collaboration with Belt and Road countries. For another example, in 2022, the ACEF and a few fellow organizations launched a survey of Chinese social organizations' contribution to global ecological and environmental governance.

Unlike mass organizations in this category, the ACEF is empowered by the MEP instead of the central leadership of the Party-state, which results in some unique characteristics. On the one hand, its bureaucratic working style is to a lesser degree,²⁵ and its administrative chain is shorter,²⁶ albeit still exists, making it more responsive to constituents' needs. It is evident in its quick responses to many environmental cases. On the other hand, its capacity and effectiveness in influencing policies are not comparable to mass organizations. First, it is not granted the power to create public policies by itself or jointly issue policy documents with other authorities. Second, as admitted by Lü Keqin and Ma Yong, it is usually difficult for the ACEF to coordinate with other policymaking authorities and to influence policies out of the jurisdiction of the MEP.²⁷ According to Ma Yong, other ministries only occasionally invited the ACEF to attend their policy meetings, and he felt the ACEF did not have effective influence at those meetings. The ACEF tried to influence the revision of the Criminal Law and proposed to enact the Tobacco Control Law. However, it never received feedback from relevant authorities.²⁸ Finally, its power in rights

²⁴ The author's interview with Lü Keqin, then advisor of the ACEF's secretary-general, on July 16, 2012, in Beijing.

²⁵ According to Lü Keqin, only a few of its personnel are listed as staffers of government-affiliated institutions (*shiye bianzhi*), while others are just employees (*pinyong*). No one in the ACEF is enlisted or treated as civil servants by the government.

²⁶ Although the ACEF has branches in different provinces, they maintain a loose relationship with the ACEF. According to Lü Keqin, these branches receive directions from local bureaus of environmental protection rather than the ACEF, and they only occasionally participate in the ACEF's policy activities. By 2022, the ACEF had 12 branch offices.

²⁷ The author's interview with Lü Keqin and Ma Yong on July 16, 2012, in Beijing.

²⁸ The author's interview with Ma Yong on July 16, 2012, in Beijing.

protection is also limited. In fact, the ACEF met great difficulties in dealing with some environmental cases. For example, it provided legal assistance to 107 aquaculture operators to sue ConocoPhillips, an American oil company, after the notorious Bohai Sea oil spill accident in 2011 (Huang and Yue 2017, 448). However, Tianjin Maritime Court refused to accept the case (Wang 2016, 617). The ACEF also suggested the Supreme People's Procuratorate investigate criminal liabilities in the case and the State Oceanic Administration sue ConocoPhillips, but they did not respond. In 2013, the ACEF sued the State Oceanic Administration for approving ConocoPhillips' reactivated production. Nonetheless, the First Intermediate Court of Beijing rejected the case.

7.2.2 Policy Influence of the CSF

Although the CSF's official sponsoring unit is the China Association for Science and Technology (CAST), one of the eight mass organizations guaranteed to attend the CPPCC, the SFA gives it directions and controls its personnel and most of its funding. According to the criterion presented before, the CSF is considered in affiliation with the SFA. Before 2008, the CSF was a passive state corporatist organization focusing on implementing forestry policies, such as training, academic and technological communication, and participating in plant quarantine. In 2002, Jiang Zehui became the president of its board of directors. Jiang Zehui is Jiang Zemin's sister. She served as the president of the Chinese Academy of Forestry and a member of the SFA's top leadership. From 1998 to 2018, she served as a vice chairwoman of the Committee of Population, Resources, and Environment in the CPPCC. After she retired from the Chinese Academy of Forestry and the SFA in 2007, she started redirecting the CSF by boosting its policy functions. According to He Ying, deputy director of the Academic Department of the CSF, Jiang Zehui emphasized influencing policies frequently in her internal addresses and guaranteed total funding allocated by the SFA.²⁹

²⁹ The author's phone interview with He Ying on August 1, 2012.

Because of Jiang Zehui's special personal status and because of the dual institutionalized channels of the SFA and the CAST, the CSF's access to higher leadership is also guaranteed. In a few years, the CSF grew into a substantial policy advisory body within the SFA system, acknowledged and encouraged by the SFA. By the end of 2013, the CSF had participated in 894 policy consultations and submitted 275 policy proposals.³⁰

The principal means of the CSF to influence policies is by conducting research projects and submitting research reports with policy proposals. Because the CSF maintains close association with renowned forestry experts, these reports usually represent authoritative opinions and attract the attention of the top leadership. For example, after the Wenchuan earthquake in 2008, the CSF submitted a proposal regarding ecological restoration to the State Council. Premier Wen Jiabao wrote comments on the report; therefore, many suggestions in the proposal were adopted in the reconstruction process. Another annual project report regarding the prevention and cure of biological forestry disasters has regularly received comments from the premier and multiple vice premiers. According to these proposals, the General Office of the State Council issued three policy documents to direct relevant work. Other research projects that had influences on policies to some extent include the construction of the Yangtze River shelterbelt, the construction of the coastal shelterbelt, the protection of natural forests, forest management and the reform of collective forest rights, and comprehensive control of wildfires and professional team building. In addition, the CSF encourages its working committees, professional branches, and local branches to conduct policy-related research projects, some of which have also successfully influenced relevant policies.

Holding conferences is another means to influence policies. In addition to numerous special symposiums, the CSF holds three national-level conferences annually. After each conference, the

³⁰ Work report of the tenth board of directors of the CSF by Jiang Zehui on January 16, 2014, available at <http://www.csf.org.cn/news/newsDetail.aspx?aid=4333>, accessed October 12, 2016.

CSF compiled policy proposals from conference papers and sent them to the State Council via the CAST or the SFA. Sometimes, these proposals were adopted. For example, a proposal regarding rodent control after the Qinghai-Tibet railway was opened to traffic received a positive response from the State Council and catalyzed relevant measures.³¹ For another example, cooperating with local governments and the CAST, the CSF held “Forest Chongqing Forum” and “Forest Fujian Forum” in 2009 and 2010, respectively. These forums had impacts on forestation policies in these two province-level administrative regions. According to He Ying, Jiang Zehui had personally pushed local governments to make these forums happen.³² By 2017, the CSF held five “Forest Ningbo Forums” and successfully influenced forestation and ecological protection policies of this city in Zhejiang province.

The CSF also influenced policies through the NPC or the CPPCC. For instance, it submitted proposals regarding the development of the biomass materials industry to the CPPCC in 2008 and 2010. In 2013, for another instance, it participated in revising the Seed Law led by the NPC and the SFA. As a senior member of the CPPCC, Jiang Zehui submitted several proposals every year, such as wetland protection and desertification control.³³

In January 2014, Zhao Shucong, who was the director of the SFA at that time but retired in 2015, succeeded Jiang Zehui as the president of the CSF’s board of directors. This arrangement showed the importance of the CSF in the SFA system. The new leadership not only reaffirmed the CSF’s policy functions but further organized the Chinese Forestry Think Tank and created a new journal called *Proposals of Forestry Experts* inside the CSF. Invited by Shaanxi Province, the Chinese Forestry Think Tank launched the study of establishing Qinling National Park and its

³¹ The author’s phone interview with He Ying on August 1, 2012.

³² Ibid.

³³ Her interview with a reporter from the Beijing News in March 2017. The text is available at <http://news.sina.com.cn/nd/2017-03-10/doc-ifychhuq3781392.shtml>, accessed July 24, 2019.

legislative protection in 2016. In 2019, it launched another project to direct a few regions in Shanxi, Sichuan, Yunnan, and Guizhou to develop the industry of cash forests. Since 2019, it has solicited and selected annually ten major scientific and technological issues in the field of forestry and grassland from relevant scientists and technologists across the country as a reference for policymaking. Proposals of Forestry Experts, the new journal of the CSF, also serves as an important channel to influence policies. The CSF sends every journal issue to the SFA and the CAST. In 2017, four articles in the journal received written comments from Zhang Jianlong, director of the SFA.³⁴ In the following years, quite a few proposals in the journal received comments from the SFA leadership and were incorporated into relevant policies.³⁵ In 2021, the journal even launched a particular activity to solicit policy proposals from experts.

Since 2016, projects launched by the CAST have become another means for the CSF to influence policies. The CSF participated in the Innovation-driven Aid Project created by the CAST and the Project of Promoting Targeted Poverty Alleviation (*jingzhun fupin*) Using Science and Technology launched by the CAST, the MOA, and the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development. As an outstanding participant in these projects, the CSF signed agreements with many local governments and institutions to provide consulting services on forestry development and ecological protection. In this process, it influenced many local economic development policies and ecological protection. In September 2018, the CAST created an Ecological Environment Consortium composed of multiple social organizations, research institutions, and enterprises to integrate research, production, and communication. The CSF and Chinese Academy of Environmental Planning, a research institution within the MEP, formed the

³⁴ 2017 Annual Report of the CSF, available at <http://www.csf.org.cn/news/noticeDetail.aspx?aid=27594>, accessed July 24, 2019.

³⁵ CSF news, <http://csf.org.cn/news/newsDetail.aspx?aid=48404>, and accessed November 19, 2020.

Working Committee for Decision-making Consultation under the consortium.³⁶ In 2019, the CSF organized a few organizations/institutions to conduct the first project designated by the consortium—an investigation of ecological environment protection and ecosystem management in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

Furthermore, the CSF has made significant progress under the new leadership to draft industrial standards and other policies. Before 2014, it only drafted Regulations on Editing Forestry Science Journals promulgated by the SFA in 2012. From 2014 to 2016, the CSF drafted three standards based on its intensive research. In 2018, the Standardization Administration approved the CSF's status of enacting group standards³⁷. Since then, it had enacted about 100 group standards by mid-2023. In 2019, the revised Forestry Law incorporates its two standards regarding the protection of old and notable trees and the development of the under-forest economy. Designated by the SFA, the CSF led a group to draft Regulations on the Protection of Old and Notable Trees in 2020, the first administrative regulation the CSF drafted.

In recent years, the CSF has increasingly become active in representing the interests of its constituencies. Since 2012, it has undertaken a project from the CAST to investigate the status quo of forestry scientists and technologists. Based on annual nationwide sample surveys, it submitted reports annually articulating their demands and proposing improvements. In 2017, it launched another large-scale project to investigate the demands of grassroots forestry technologists for the CSF's services. The CSF also paid attention to the interests of forest managers. From 2012 to 2013, it conducted a field study on managers of collective forests in six provinces to increase their production and incomes. In 2015 and 2016, the CSF conducted surveys of state-owned forest farm

³⁶ CSF News, <http://www.csf.org.cn/news/newsDetail.aspx?aid=48011>, accessed July 24, 2019.

³⁷ According to the Standardization Law revised in 2017, the state encourages social organizations to enact group standards. Standards include national standards, trade standards, local standards, group standards, and enterprise standards. Some national standards are compulsory standards, while all other standards are recommendatory standards. In this research, the term "industrial standards" refers to all these standards.

workers in Henan and Guizhou when it investigated the protection of natural forests in these two provinces. In 2018, it held a conference for representatives of its members to collect their opinions on the CSF's work. In 2019, it conducted a nationwide survey of nature education, including nature educators, and sent the survey report to the Central Committee of the CCP.

However, the CSF's interest representation also has limitations. Almost all leaders' addresses and work plans/reviews of the CSF mention that its work must center on the SFA's main objectives and facilitate state policies. Furthermore, because its leadership includes more government officials and it maintains closer connections with subordinate committees and branches, its bureaucratic working style is probably more severe than that of the ACEF. All these make its response to constituents' needs slower, which is evident in its delayed activities of interest representation in recent years. Even worse, as He Ying admitted, the CSF has no contact with bottom-up environmental organizations. All its partners are organizations with official backgrounds.³⁸ This aloofness limits its capacity to connect grassroots to governments and its interest in broader environmental issues.

Like the ACEF, its capacity and effectiveness to influence policies are also limited. The CSF does not have the power to create public policies by itself or participate in inspections of policy implementation organized by the NPC or the CPPCC. It works in a niche and acts within the jurisdiction of the SFA. It is usually much more complicated to achieve its goals when other ministries are involved. According to He Ying, although the SFA invited the CSF to attend its policy meetings frequently, other ministries never invited the CSF. The CSF once contradicted the former Ministry of Land and Resources on the issue of the reform of collective forest rights. In another case, the General Office of the State Council refused to adopt the CSF's multiple proposals

³⁸ The author's phone interview with He Ying on August 1, 2012.

regarding the quarantine of forest plants because of the intervention from the MOA.³⁹

7.2.3 Policy Influence of the CEC

Jiang Chunyun, a former member of the politburo and a former vice premier and vice chairman of the NPC standing committee, and Qu Geping, former minister of the MEP, founded the CEC under the MEP in 2011. As introduced in Chapter Two, Jiang was also the chairman of the CFPA and popularized the GSGFP. Chen Zongxing, a former vice governor of Shaanxi Province and vice chairman of the CPPCC, and Zhu Guangyao, a former MEP vice minister, acted as its president and executive deputy president, respectively. In 2022, Zhang Bo, former MEP chief engineer, became the CEC's president. This high-profile leadership has positioned the organization as a high-end think tank for promoting ecological civilization from its inception. Xi Jinping, Li Keqiang, the minister, and multiple vice ministers of the MEP supported this goal in their directions or addresses by emphasizing the CEC's function of making policy proposals.⁴⁰ With the granted power to participate in the policy process, the CEC has developed into an active policy advocate in a short period.

In 2012, with the help of Jiang Chunyun, the CEC submitted a proposal to the drafting group of the 18th CCP National Congress report advocating the strategic position of constructing ecological civilization.⁴¹ This proposal coincided with the standpoint of the new leadership and was adopted in the report. Since 2013, it has submitted proposals to the NPC and the CPPCC every year via NPC representatives and CPPCC members in its board or experts committee. The proposal to include ecological civilization in the Constitution of the PRC was adopted in 2018. Another proposal regarding establishing demonstration regions of ecological civilization was turned into a

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ See news reports from multiple resources, including websites of the CEC and the MEP: <http://www.cecrpa.org.cn/gzdt/ldjh/9671.htm>, http://www.wzloco.com/wx_read.asp?type_id=29&id=1574, and http://www.mep.gov.cn/gkml/hbb/qt/201111/t20111114_219917.htm, accessed August 15, 2017.

⁴¹ CEC news at http://www.cecrpa.org.cn/sxyw/whdt/202109/t20210908_907911.shtml, accessed May 15, 2023.

policy document approved by the Central Leading Group for Comprehensively Deepening Reform in 2016. Since then, the CEC has regularly provided technical support for these regions. In 2018 and 2019, the CEC proposed to enact the Ecological Civilization Construction Promotion Law twice and received responses from relevant authorities.⁴² In 2019, the CEC set up a legal department to strengthen legal studies. In 2021, it started to enact industrial standards.

Like the CSF, the CEC conducted research projects and sent reports with policy proposals to relevant authorities. The research on the index system and performance appraisal of constructing ecological civilization served as a base for a policy document approved by the Central Leading Group for Comprehensively Deepening Reform in 2016. Other research projects received positive feedback from relevant authorities, including the value of ecological resources, the usage of clean fuels, reducing the application of chemical fertilizers, the development of ecological civilization in western China, and green transportation. Providing consulting services to local governments is another domain of the CEC's work, influencing local plans for ecological construction and other environmental policies. Sometimes, the CEC signed long-term agreements with local governments. In this process, the CEC invented an index system for appraising ecological civilization construction in sub-provincial or bay area cities as a valuable tool for policy evaluation.

To form a guideline for its five-year work plan, the CEC conducted intensive field studies in 2016-2017, in which it collected first-hand cases from the grassroots. In March 2017, it held a symposium based on the studies to create a list of critical issues of constructing ecological civilization and relevant policy proposals. After the symposium, the CEC submitted these proposals to the CCP Central Committee through Jiang Chunyun. A few were included in the 19th

⁴² CEC news at http://www.cecrpa.org.cn/sxyw/whdt/202203/t20220323_972422.shtml, accessed May 15, 2023.

CCP National Congress report.⁴³ In addition, numerous forums, symposiums, and conferences it held served as platforms to connect grassroots to governments. The most influential forum, the China Ecological Civilization Forum, has been held every year since its founding, and various policy issues were discussed at these forums. These forums also impacted host city policies.⁴⁴ However, just like the CSF, the CEC stays aloof from bottom-up environmental organizations, and all its leaders' addresses accentuate facilitating state strategies. The CEC also suffers from limited capacity and effectiveness to influence policies—it does not have the power to create public policies, and it has difficulties coordinating multiple ministries.

7.3 Passive State Corporatism

Of all 27 top-down environmental organizations affiliated with government agencies in this research, only the three organizations introduced above fall into the category of active state corporatism. On the one hand, high-level and proactive founders/leaders of those three organizations contribute to their empowerment. On the other hand, agencies' status in the field matters. The MEP needs more active policy assistants to strengthen its own status as the major agency taking charge of environmental protection, which explains why it has empowered two active state corporatist organizations—the ACEF and the CEC. Along with the rise of the SFA in the field of environment, it also needs the CSF to play an active policy role continually. It is consistent with the previous finding that government agencies assuming major responsibilities in a field tend to make at least some of their affiliated organizations play more substantial policy roles. The difference is that the MEP and the SFA further empower three active state corporatist organizations. It may relate to Xi Jinping's accentuation of environmental protection and

⁴³ CEC news, available at www.cccrpa.org.cn/gzdt/ldjh/11309.htm, accessed July 29, 2019.

⁴⁴ In December 2018, those cities that hosted these forums specifically discussed such impacts at a conference. See CEC news at http://www.cccrpa.org.cn/gzdt/zthd/201901/t20190113_689343.shtml, accessed July 31, 2019.

ecological civilization construction.

As also found in previous chapters, organizations affiliated with government agencies usually fall into the categories of passive state corporatism or symbolic state corporatism. It holds in the field of environment by and large. All the other 24 organizations accord with the criteria of passive state corporatism. Their fundamental commonality is that none of them has received de jure or de facto authorization from their supervisory agencies or higher authorities to participate in the whole policy process. Establishing and operating them aims to implement relevant policies generally or in specific areas. These organizations cannot go through all policy stages. They are basically absent in agenda setting because they bring forward few policy initiatives. Their participation in policy formulation or evaluation is usually based on invitations or directives. They usually do not actively collect and articulate opinions of their constituencies, although sometimes they may serve as platforms to connect grassroots and governments.

7.3.1 Organizations Affiliated with Government Agencies

Even though the MEP empowers the ACEF and the CEC to actively participate in the policy process, four other affiliated organizations do not acquire equal status, showing that the MEP's interest in building active policy assistants is limited. China Environmental Protection Foundation was established to collect funds for conducting environmental projects, including a legal project. In June 2015, it established a special fund for EPILs. After filing 15 EPILs, the foundation terminated the special fund in 2018.⁴⁵ It never launched any policy actions based on these environmental cases. Chinese Society for Environmental Sciences focuses on studying environmental sciences and technologies and science popularization. It submitted a few expert reports or participated in enacting some industrial standards in response to government

⁴⁵ The foundation's introduction of the EPIL Special Fund is available at http://www.cepf.org.cn/company/201902/t20190225_693551.htm, accessed August 7, 2019.

assignments. However, it has few records to initiate policy proposals. The mission of the China Forum of Environmental Journalists is to promote environmental protection and education by conducting propagandistic activities. In contrast to a few dedicated bottom-up environmental organizations that will be introduced in the next chapter, it never mobilized environmental reporters and launched media campaigns to influence environmental policies. Since 2013, it has issued assessment reports of publicly traded companies' disclosure of environmental responsibility information every year, but it never urged the governments to monitor and promote their disclosure. All these three organizations facilitate policy implementation in their respective fields. Chinese Society for Environmental Sciences sometimes participates in policy formulation per requests of the MEP and some other agencies, while the other two are not involved in other policy stages.

China Environmental Culture Promotion Association (CECPA) under the MEP was founded as a propaganda platform to promote environmental culture in 1992. Interestingly, it had shown some characteristics of active state corporatism after it was reorganized in 2003 and Pan Yue, a former pro-reform vice minister of the MEP (Hildebrandt and Turner 2009, 103; Matsuzawa 2020, 681), was appointed its president (Chan et al. 2008, 301; Chen 2009, 44): it held 14 Green China Forums and many symposiums to discuss environmental policy issues; it conducted several research projects for the enactment of the twelfth "five-year plan" for environmental protection and the revision of the Environmental Protection Law; more importantly, it submitted multiple proposals to the CPPCC since 2005 via CPPCC members in its board, and several of these proposals had catalyzed policy changes; the CECPA also actively represented the interests of its constituencies by producing Chinese People's Environmental Livelihood Index based on annual nationwide sample surveys; it maintained good relationships with bottom-up environmental organizations and participated in some joint activities such as the 26°C Air Conditioning Energy-

saving Campaign. However, all this policy participation suddenly halted after the CECPA's secretary-general, a loyal subordinate of Pan Yue, was arrested because of a financial crime in October 2008 (Zhang 2018, 30). Since then, Pan Yue intentionally alienated himself from the CECPA. In 2016, he was pulled out of the MEP. According to the author's interview with Zhang Liang, then deputy director of the CECPA's Department of Social Affairs, the CECPA had switched back to only conducting projects designated by the MEP after 2009.⁴⁶ In the following years, the CECPA returned to its propaganda function and engaged in activities unrelated to policy issues. In July 2019, the MEP decided to dissolve the CECPA and merge it into the CEC. In general, the CECPA was a passive state corporatist organization, although it showed some signs of active state corporatism during a certain period, thanks to an open-minded leader.

Of nine social organizations under the SFA, the CSF is the only organization empowered to participate in the policy process actively. All the other eight organizations fall into the category of passive state corporatism. China Wildlife Conservation Association (CWCA) serves as a good example. It was founded in 1983 to facilitate the SFA in implementing policies regarding wildlife conservation. Although the SFA often invited the CWCA to attend its policy meetings regarding wildlife conservation, it usually exerted little influence. Other agencies seldom invited the CWCA to attend their meetings.⁴⁷ The only departmental rule the CWCA drafted, Measures for the Management of Safari Parks, eventually failed to be adopted. The CWCA seldom initiated policy proposals. It never submitted a proposal to the NPC or the CPPCC. Even though the voice of revising the Wild Animal Conservation Law had emerged (Li P. 2021, 221, 245), the CWCA did not join the motion. In the wake of the outbreak of COVID-19, the Standing Committee of the NPC promulgated a decision in February 2020 to ban illegal wild animal transactions and eating

⁴⁶ The author's interview with Zhang Liang on July 12, 2012, in Beijing.

⁴⁷ The author's interview with Li Qingwen, then deputy secretary-general of the CWCA, on July 26, 2012, in Beijing.

terrestrial wild animals (Li P. 2021, 266). These provisions also appear in the revised Wild Animal Conservation Law adopted in 2022. The CWCA played no role in forming these policies but planned to implement them through its science popularization and legal education projects.⁴⁸ Although the CWCA has more than 700 local branches and about 340 thousand members throughout the country, it neither encouraged nor cooperated with them to influence policies.⁴⁹ Its interest representation of constituencies is also passive. The CWCA held numerous conferences and symposiums to discuss wildlife conservation, sometimes serving as platforms to connect grassroots and governments. However, it did not compile policy proposals generated from these meetings and submitted them to policymakers. In 2010 and 2011, the CWCA held two NGO fellowship meetings, at which a few bottom-up environmental organizations were present. Nevertheless, the CWCA never cooperated with them to influence policies.⁵⁰ In 1999 and 2006, it conducted two nationwide surveys of the consumption of wild animals as food, which only resulted in social mobilizations instead of consistent efforts to influence policies.

Other passive state corporatist organizations under the SFA include the China Green Foundation, the Great Wall Greening Promotion Association of China, China Wild Plant Conservation Association, China Council for the Promotion of Environment and Forestry, China Foundation for Desertification Control, China National Sand Control and Desert Industry Society, and China Cash Forest Association. All these organizations facilitate implementing policies of environmental afforestation and plant conservation. They share the same characteristics as the CWCA but have been involved in even less policy-related activities than the CWCA.

Unlike the MEP and the SFA, other agencies taking charge of environment-related affairs

⁴⁸ See CWCA news at <http://www.cwca.org.cn/news/dynamic/402881e66e92a2d901707f2255cd0122.html>, accessed May 15, 2023.

⁴⁹ The author's interview with Li Qingwen on July 26, 2012, in Beijing.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

never empowered affiliated organizations to participate in the policy process actively. These organizations include the Chinese Society of Soil and Water Conservation (CSSWC) and the Chinese Agricultural Water-saving & Rural Drinking Water Supply Technology Association under the Ministry of Water Resources, the Chinese Society of Agro-Ecological Environment Protection and the China Biogas Society under the MOA, the Chinese Society for Oceanography under the State Oceanic Administration, the China Energy Conservation Association under the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection, and Quarantine⁵¹ and the NDRC, the Chinese Society for Sustainable Development under the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Chinese Association of Parks, the China Association of National Parks and Scenic Sites, the Chinese Society of Landscape Architecture, the Chinese Association of Zoological Gardens, and the China Association of Urban Environmental Sanitation under the MOHURD.

These organizations all focus on implementing policies in their respective fields instead of putting forward policy initiatives. The only exceptional case was that the China Energy Conservation Association submitted a policy initiative regarding the application of biomass energy in rural areas to relevant agencies in 2019.⁵² Some organizations have opportunities to participate in the formulation/revision of particular policies or to conduct surveys. However, it is usually based on assignments or invitations. For example, to fulfill the requirement of the MOHURD, the Chinese Society of Landscape Architecture conducted surveys of landscaping construction enterprises in more than a dozen cities in 2019.⁵³ For another example, the SFA invited the China

⁵¹ This agency merged into the State Administration for Market Regulation in March 2018. The State Administration for Industry and Commerce and the State Food and Drug Administration also merged into the State Administration for Market Regulation in March 2018. However, the State Administration for Industry and Commerce and the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection, and Quarantine were dissolved, while the State Food and Drug Administration was preserved and renamed the National Medical Products Administration.

⁵² See the 2019 work report of the China Energy Conservation Association at http://www.cccaweb.org.cn/home/column.php?portal_id=1&column_id=17&column_group=&column_type=0&parent_id=15, accessed November 24, 2020.

⁵³ See the 2019 work report of the Chinese Society of Landscape Architecture at http://www.chsla.org.cn/Column/Detail?Id=4914249052836864&_MID=1100028, accessed November 24, 2020.

Association of National Parks and Scenic Sites to participate in the revision of Regulations on Scenic and Historic Areas in 2022.⁵⁴ The CSSWC serves as a typical case in this group. Its primary function is to provide services such as training, academic communication, technological appraisal, and science popularization. Its only activity to influence local policies was conducting a survey project of the Wei River Conservancy assigned by the CAST in 2016.⁵⁵ The CSSWC never submitted a proposal to the NPC or the CPPCC. Neither does it have connections with grassroots environmental organizations.⁵⁶ Another case is the China Association of National Parks and Scenic Sites. In 2018, the SFA took over the management of all conservation areas, and this association started to receive directions from both the SFA and the MOHURD. The organization has since participated in more policy activities, such as formulating national standards and other policies and facilitating some local governments or scenic sites to draft developmental designs. However, these were all based on assignments or invitations from the SFA, the MOHURD, or local governments/institutions. The organization itself did not put forward any policy initiatives.

7.3.2 An Exceptional Case: the CBCGDF

An exceptional case in this category is the China Biodiversity Conservation and Green Development Foundation (CBCGDF). Although its sole supervisory body is the CAST, i.e., it is not affiliated with any government agencies, it has grown out of symbolic state corporatism, to which its peer organizations belong. Furthermore, it has shown some characteristics of active state corporatism in recent years.

The precursor of the CBCGDF was China Pere David's Deer Foundation, founded in 1985. It was not involved in policy activities until Hu Deping was appointed as its president in 2010. Hu

⁵⁴ See a news report of the organization at <http://www.china-npa.org/info/3997.jsp>, accessed May 15, 2023.

⁵⁵ See CSSWC news at <http://www.sbxh.org/sbxhindex/a/xinwenzixun/xuehuixinwen/2016/0802/717.html>, accessed August 9, 2019.

⁵⁶ The author's interview with Zhang Yan, then deputy secretary-general of the CSSWC, on July 13, 2012, in Beijing.

Deping is the oldest son of Hu Yaobang, former General Secretary of the CCP. He was also deputy director of the United Front Work Department of the CCP, vice Chairman of the All China Federation of Industry and Commerce (ACFIC), and a member of the Standing Committee of the NPC and the CPPCC. Hu Deping started to build the CBCGDF's policy role by implementing new environmental policies. In July 2011, the CBCGDF held a high-profile conference in the Great Hall of the People in response to the China Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2011-2030) approved by the State Council in 2010. After the conference, the CBCGDF held a series of forums and training sessions and created a few demonstration bases for biodiversity conservation. In the following years, it created a conservation system called China Conservation Areas. By the end of 2021, it had established more than 180 conservation areas throughout the country.⁵⁷ Relying on volunteers, the CBCGDF has established many Anti-Electric Fishing Cooperation Centers to assist local bureaus of fisheries in enforcing fishing regulations. In addition, the CBCGDF conducts poverty alleviation projects in western China and engages in academic communication, training, and science popularization.⁵⁸

At the end of 2014, Zhou Jinfeng, a former colleague of Hu Deping in the ACFIC and the CPPCC and a famous social entrepreneur who initiated the renowned China Glory Program for poverty alleviation, was appointed as the secretary-general of the CBCGDF. In 2015, Ma Yong and Lü Keqin were invited to be deputy secretary-general and advisor, respectively. These personnel changes have significantly impacted the CBCGDF's working agenda. After implementing the Environmental Protection Law in 2015, the CBCGDF has become one of the significant social organizations that engage in filing EPILs. Furthermore, its interest in influencing

⁵⁷ The CBCGDF's self-introduction is available at <http://www.cbcdgdf.org/NewsShow/4935/21977.html>, accessed May 16, 2023.

⁵⁸ See its annual work reports from 2010 to 2021, available at <http://www.cbcdgdf.org/NewsList/4869.html>, accessed May 16, 2023.

environmental policies is growing fast. In 2019, Xie Boyang became the president of the CBCGDF. He was also a vice chairman of the ACFIC, a member of the CPPCC, and a co-founder of the China Glory Program. As a former colleague of both Hu and Zhou, he guarantees the continuation of the CBCGDF's undertakings.

By 2016, the CBCGDF had filed 63 EPILs in 23 provinces, accounting for more than 50% of EPILs filed by social organizations in 2015 and 2016.⁵⁹ By 2021, it had filed more than one hundred EPILs, more than 10 of which were listed as guiding cases by the Supreme People's Court.⁶⁰ Among these cases, the CBCGDF v. eight enterprises that polluted the Tengger Desert was the most influential. This case received Xi Jinping's comments and finally resolved the issue of social organizations' qualification to file EPILs (Gao 2018, 64-65; Zhai and Chang 2018, 378). Another influential case was the CBCGDF v. Beijing Liu Shikun Nursery School. The school eventually removed its toxic synthetic running tracks, and many schools across the country either voluntarily followed suit or were forced to do so. More importantly, the MOE and two other agencies enacted the first compulsory national standard to regulate synthetic sports areas in primary and middle schools in 2018. However, the CBCGDF cannot achieve its goals all the time. The Qingdao Maritime Affairs Court dismissed the case against ConocoPhillips and China National Offshore Oil Corporation for the Bohai Sea oil spill accident in 2017. In the same year, the CBCGDF and the FON lost the first trial of the case of "Changzhou Foreign Language School's toxic site" and were required to pay a considerable litigation fee of 1.89 million yuan, which aroused public outrage (Gao 2018, 55; Tang 2018b, 140-145; Zhang 2019, 162; Huang 2020, 169-170). In the second trial of the case, the Jiangsu High People's Court repealed the litigation fee. It

⁵⁹ CBCGDF News, <http://www.cbcdgf.org/NewsShow/4936/866.html>, accessed March 2, 2017.

⁶⁰ See the CBCGDF's self-introduction, available at <http://www.cbcdgf.org/NewsShow/4935/21977.html>, accessed May 16, 2023.

confirmed the responsibility of three enterprises that polluted the site while it exempted them from environmental damage compensation. Unsatisfied with the results, the CBCGDF petitioned the Supreme People's Court for a retrial in 2019. The Supreme People's Court approved the retrial in 2020 and started the legal process in August 2022. However, it was still underway as of mid-2023. As admitted by Ma Yong, the CBCGDF and other social organizations still face difficulties in filing EPILs, such as case acceptance problems and high costs and risks.⁶¹

In addition to policy implementation, the CBCGDF actively participates in policy formulation or evaluation. It often responded to public opinion solicitations for various environmental policies. However, it was rare to achieve remarkable outcomes in this way. An exceptional case occurred in 2016. Based on detailed research, the CBCGDF substantially influenced the revision of a judicial interpretation concerning criminal cases of environmental pollution promulgated by the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate. Another successful case occurred in 2020. The CBCGDF submitted 66 proposals to the MEP in response to public opinion solicitation of seven national standards, including Technological Guidance for Ecological Environment Damage Appraisal. Sixty of these proposals were adopted.⁶² Sometimes, the CBCGDF was invited to attend policy meetings. For example, in January 2017, the CPPCC invited Zhou Jinfeng to attend a preparatory meeting of its biweekly deliberative symposium to discuss the revision of the Law on the Prevention and Control of Water Pollution. He proposed to add administrative EPILs into the law and delivered his concerns over the MOCA's draft version of the Interim Measures for the Random Inspection of Social Organizations, which he deemed unfavorable to social organizations. However, these efforts did not generate visible

⁶¹ See Ma Yong's interview with a reporter from Legal Weekly in April 2019, available at <http://www.cbcdgdf.org/NewsShow/4856/8336.html>, accessed August 14, 2019.

⁶² CBCGDF news, <http://www.cbcdgdf.org/NewsShow/4854/14417.html>, accessed December 3, 2020.

policy outcomes. The revised Law on the Prevention and Control of Water Pollution promulgated in June 2017 omits administrative EPILs, and the CBCGDF's concerns are also entirely disregarded in the MOCA's departmental rule implemented in March 2017. The MEP invited the CBCGDF to attend its policy meetings more often, but the CBCGDF neither could exert significant influence at these meetings.

Most importantly, the CBCGDF actively participates in agenda setting and often brings forward policy initiatives. Thanks to the extensive connections of its leaders with current CPPCC members, the CBCGDF has submitted proposals to the CPPCC or the NPC every year since 2015. Some proposals were more successful than others. For instance, as a positive response to one of its proposals, the SFA advanced pangolins from Class II state protection to the top level in 2020. For another instance, its proposal regarding establishing special funds for ecological rehabilitation was also realized. Nevertheless, those proposals for enacting the Biodiversity Conservation Law and the Anti-Cruelty to Animals Law never came true. Occasionally, the CBCGDF directly sent proposals to administrative agencies to advocate for certain policies. For example, a proposal to the MOE suggesting abstaining from plastic book covers was approved. The MOE and three other agencies jointly issued a document in 2019 encouraging abandoning plastic book covers. The MEP endorsed its proposal to supervise wild animals in the central inspection system for ecological environment protection in 2020. Before these successful cases, the CBCGDF sent a proposal to the MOPS in 2017 suggesting abolishing the plastic covers and pockets for drivers' licenses and another proposal to the Ministry of Natural Resources in 2018 advocating for extensive protection of coastal wetlands. Unfortunately, these two ministries never responded.

Since 2015, the CBCGDF has shown characteristics of active state corporatism, largely thanks to its new executive leadership. In addition to actively implementing relevant policies by

filing EPILs and other activities, it tries to participate in agenda setting, policy formulation, and evaluation and has put forward many policy initiatives. Its willingness and frequency of actions to influence policies are obviously higher than those of ordinary passive state corporatist organizations. Furthermore, the CBCGDF cooperates with some bottom-up environmental organizations and sometimes makes efforts to connect grassroots to the official system. However, the CBCGDF never received de jure or de facto authorizations to participate in the whole policy process. On the contrary, its own official status could still be unstable. In December 2016, the MOCA notified the CBCGDF that it might fail to pass the 2015 annual inspection. It was especially a surprise after the CBCGDF had significantly contributed to environmental protection and received several high-profile honors. Although the MOCA granted it a pass later, it is still difficult for the CBCGDF to affect the MOCA's decisions, as shown in the case of the MOCA's unfavorable departmental rule presented above. Similarly, it has no significant influence on other agencies, including the MEP. Without official empowerment, the CBCGDF cannot go through all policy stages as active state corporatist organizations usually do, despite its efforts to exert influence in every policy stage. In addition, its effectiveness in influencing policies is still lower than typical active state corporatist organizations. Cases of extraordinarily successful lobbying are still rare, and it was never appointed/invited by official institutions to draft policy documents. Even though the CBCGDF was sometimes invited to policy meetings, it could hardly play an important role. In general, although the CBCGDF is trying to act as an active state corporatist organization, it does not fully qualify the category of active state corporatism. To date, it is a passive state corporatist organization exceptionally showing characteristics of active state corporatism. In the future, whether it could gain official authorization and develop into a full-fledged active state corporatist organization or fall back to typical passive state corporatism like the CECPA deserves further

observation.

7.4 Symbolic State Corporatism

As classified in the first section, one group of top-down environmental organizations has other institutions as their supervisory bodies and does not receive directions from government agencies. This chapter studies ten such organizations whose common official sponsoring unit is the CAST. Among these ten organizations, the CBCGDF is the only exceptional one. All the other nine organizations fall into the category of symbolic state corporatism, which contrasts those affiliated with government agencies.

Although the CAST is their de jure sponsoring unit for registration, all these organizations reside in other institutions, which act as their de facto supervisory bodies. Six of them reside in subordinate units of the Chinese Academy of Science (CAS): the China Zoological Society and the Entomological Society of China are affiliated with the Institute of Zoology of the CAS; the China Society of Natural Resources and the China Society on Tibet Plateau are affiliated with the Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research of the CAS; the Ecological Society of China is under the Research Center for Eco-Environmental Sciences of the CAS; the China Renewable Energy Society is affiliated with the Institute of Electrical Engineering of the CAS. The other three organizations reside in other research institutions: the China Society of Plant Protection is under the Institute of Plant Protection of the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, while the Chinese Grassland Society is affiliated with the Department of Grass Science at China Agricultural University; the Chinese Environmental Mutagen Society has changed its affiliation from Shanghai Second Military Medical University to Peking University Health Science Center.

None of these organizations is granted the power to participate in the policy process.

Because they are not affiliated with government agencies, these organizations have few assignments from agencies to implement relevant policies and fewer opportunities to assume some administrative functions delegated by agencies. In the same vein, agencies usually do not invite them to formulate or evaluate policies, let alone draft policies. Their policy initiatives are also rare to see. The only case occurred in 2017 when the China Renewable Energy Society turned a research project regarding energy transformation in Hebei Province into a proposal submitted to the NPC. In response to the national strategy of Western Development, the China Society on Tibet Plateau conducted several consulting projects on the development of Tibet and the Changdu District based on local governments' invitations in the early 21st century. However, it has lost momentum as the national strategy of Western Development faded out over time. Although the CAST has tried to strengthen the policy function of affiliated organizations in recent years and has organized the Ecological Environment Consortium, as mentioned in the case of the CSF, these organizations do not seem to be adequately mobilized and empowered. The only leading organization for decision-making consultation in the consortium is the CSF. Zhang Yuzhuo, the CCP secretary of the CAST, admitted that the CSF was the vanguard of all social organizations supervised by the CAST in 2021.⁶³ Some of these organizations also participated in the Innovation-driven Aid Project created by the CAST. However, none of them was as active as the CSF. For example, the Ecological Society of China provided consulting services regarding ecological construction to a few local governments in 2017. In contrast to the CSF, it did not build constant relationships with them and stopped the services in the following years. In addition, this society's multiple forums failed to generate specific policy proposals and subsequent lobbying efforts. The China Society of Plant Protection, for another example, merely provided technological instead of

⁶³ See Zhang Yuzhuo's address when he visited the CSF in August 2021, available at <http://csf.org.cn/News/newsDetail.aspx?aid=58588>, accessed May 14, 2023.

policy support when conducting consultation projects. This society's only long-term policy-related project is the prevention and control of biological disasters delegated by the CAST and conducted with the CSF. In 2020 and 2021, it facilitated the popularization of Regulations on the Prevention and Control of Crop Disease and Pests and the Biosecurity Law. However, no records showed it had influenced these policies' formulation. In general, all these organizations seldom directly engage in policy-related activities. Instead, they focus on academic/technological communication and science popularization. Their willingness, actions, and effectiveness to influence policies are all at low levels. Furthermore, they do not have records of actively collecting and articulating opinions of their supposed-to-be constituencies and influencing policies based on these opinions. These organizations possess no long-lasting connections with the grassroots, including bottom-up environmental organizations.

Excluding the CBCGDF, a clear line is drawn between environmental organizations affiliated with government agencies and those affiliated with other institutions. The former group includes either active or passive state corporatist organizations, while the latter group only encompasses symbolic state corporatist organizations despite similar working objects of a few organizations in both groups. For example, the China Zoological Society, the China Society of Plant Protection, and the Ecological Society of China work in similar areas as the CWCA under the SFA, the China Wild Plant Conservation Association under the SFA, and the CEC under the MEP, respectively. However, the inertia of the former three organizations in the policy arena is distinct from more or less policy participation of the latter three organizations. Government agencies tend to assign some policy functions to affiliated organizations to facilitate their own work, while other institutions may not have such a requirement for their affiliated organizations because their incentives to implement relevant policies are not comparable with those of

government agencies. Furthermore, de facto supervisory bodies of these organizations discourage their policy participation. Although the CAST is the de jure sponsoring unit for these nine environmental organizations, various education/research institutions serve as their de facto supervisory bodies that do not have essential policy functions. Focusing on academic and technological issues, these education/research institutions neither have the power to participate in the whole policy process nor serve as major policy implementation entities in their specific areas. These nine organizations are tightly connected to them and receive essential resources from them. Therefore, their policy inertia has been transmitted to these organizations. Because the CBCGDF does not have such kind of de facto supervisory bodies, it could grow out of symbolic state corporatism. By the same token, those women's studies centers identified in Chapter Two also fall into the category of symbolic state corporatism.

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter studies the policy influence of top-down environmental organizations, which contributes to the existing literature, given that the topic has remained under-researched. This chapter finds all three modes of policy (non)influence in these organizations. With the absence of mass organizations, most organizations affiliated with government agencies behave passively in influencing policies and representing the interests of their constituents, which is consistent with the findings in previous chapters. However, three top-down organizations affiliated with agencies—the ACEF and the CEC under the MEP and the CSF under the SFA—fall into the category of active state corporatism, which is not found in other types of social organizations. In an eco-friendly political context, the status of government agencies in charge of environmental affairs has risen in the bureaucratic system. Among them, the Party-state expanded and strengthened the MEP and the SFA to be major agencies in the field. They inherently demand

active policy assistants and have the impetus to empower a few affiliated organizations. It coincides with the previous observation that agencies assuming major responsibilities in a field tend to assign more substantial policy functions to their affiliated organizations. In addition, these three organizations' high-level and proactive founders/leaders contribute to their empowerment. However, in addition to the usual limitations of interest representation, even though they may be to a lesser degree in these organizations, they suffer from more limited capacity and effectiveness in influencing policies than mass organizations.

Most top-down environmental organizations affiliated with other institutions—the CAST serves as their *de jure* sponsoring unit, and some education/research institutions serve as their *de facto* supervisory bodies—fall into the category of symbolic state corporatism. An exceptional case is the CBCGDF affiliated with the CAST. It grew out of symbolic state corporatism in 2010 and has shown characteristics of active state corporatism since 2015, thanks to a leadership change. However, it still stays in the category of passive state corporatism. Excluding this exceptional organization, a clear line is drawn between organizations affiliated with government agencies and those affiliated with other institutions. Comparing these two groups of organizations, government agencies tend to assign some policy functions to affiliated organizations to facilitate their own work, while other institutions usually do not have such a need and requirement for their affiliated organizations. In addition, those education/research institutions, as *de facto* supervisory bodies, lack policy functions and consequently discourage policy participation of their affiliated organizations.

As shown in some organizations, leadership is vital in changing organizational trajectories. Before 2008, the CSF was only an ordinary passive state corporatist organization under the SFA. It was Jiang Zehui who promoted its policy functions and led it into active state corporatism. Since

2014, Zhao Shucong has sustained the status of this organization. Similarly, Hu Deping significantly switched the CBCGDF from symbolic state corporatism to passive state corporatism in 2010. After new executive officers, such as Zhou Jinfeng, Lü Keqin, and Ma Yong, joined the organization in 2014-2015, it has increasingly shown characteristics of active state corporatism and become a salient environmental organization in China. The CECPA showed an inverse path. Between 2003 and 2008, it displayed some characteristics of active state corporatism because of Pan Yue's appointment as its president. As Pan Yue abruptly alienated himself from the organization, it lost these characteristics. From the outset, the ACEF and the CEC possess high-level leaders who have initiated and sustained their active policy roles. The high-profile leaders of the CEC significantly contribute to the surprising policy influence of this relatively young organization.

The categorization of the policy influence of top-down environmental organizations is shown in Table 8.1. Combining bottom-up environmental organizations, this table is presented in Chapter Eight.

Chapter 8 BOTTOM-UP ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

This chapter studies bottom-up environmental organizations. Like top-down environmental organizations, not all bottom-up environmental organizations are active in influencing policies and representing the interests of their constituencies. In those organizations that actively influence policies, both critical pluralism and embedded pluralism are salient because they have had remarkable achievements and created some typical cases, making them deserve the label of the vanguard of Chinese civil society. The discovery of varied modes of policy (non)influence in environmental organizations in this research complements existing literature.

8.1 Critical Pluralism

A cluster of bottom-up environmental organizations falls into the category of critical pluralism. Unlike their counterparts in other fields, a few of them have not only survived the generally restrictive political environment but thrived in exploring new methods and achieving more policy influence. On the one hand, the Xi Jinping administration has continuously stressed environmental protection, creating a relatively tolerant atmosphere for both top-down and bottom-up environmental organizations, as Zhang Boju, director-general of the FON, admitted to a People's Daily journalist (Pan 2013). On the other hand, domestic funds in the field of environment, as important supplements to traditional foreign funding sources, have increased in recent years (Zhan and Tang 2014, 386; Li 2016, 22; Shapiro 2019, 117; Xu 2020, 15-17; Wu and Martus 2021, 501), which was verified by multiple organizational leaders the author interviewed. This section will introduce these organizations adopting critical pluralism. Two organizations, the GEV and the FON, have been the oldest and pioneering guards of the environment in China. Furthermore, they typically represent the mode of critical pluralism and created the most classic cases in this category.

Therefore, the following two subsections will individually introduce them. The third subsection will cover the rest of the organizations in this category.

8.1.1 Policy Influence of Green Earth Volunteers (GEV)

As its name shows, volunteers, including journalists, environmental experts, and even sympathetic government officials, serve as the GEV's primary resource to achieve organizational goals (Xie 2020, 104). As a former senior journalist in China National Radio, Wang Yongchen organized an environmental journalists' network for the GEV (Xie 2009, 94-95). Environmental Salon for Journalists, created in 2000, is the most important platform to communicate with and mobilize environmental journalists (Xie 2020, 109-110). Since 2006, these journalists played a crucial role in completing a series of investigations for the GEV, including annual Investigation Reports by Chinese Environmental Journalists, investigations of international environmental NGOs in China, Chinese domestic environmental NGOs, and China's nature reserves. These investigations provide a base for the GEV to influence policies. Since 2003, the GEV has concentrated on the protection of China's rivers and created such brand activities as "Happy Water Excursion," "Decade Travel along Rivers," and "Decade Travel along the Yellow River (Xie 2020, 107-109; Xu 2020, 99-105; Xu and Byrne 2021, 624-625)." Many environmental issues were discovered in these activities and triggered the GEV's policy actions. From 2011 to 2014, the GEV continuously disclosed the pollution in the Tengger Desert. The media campaign in 2014 successfully attracted Xi Jinping's attention. Under his direction, 24 officials were punished, and more than 30 chemical enterprises in the desert were removed or rectified. The GEV's efforts, in this case, powerfully supported the CBCGDF's action to file the well-known EPIL mentioned in Chapter Seven. Recently, the GEV has started to accept accusations of pollution from the public, which serves as a new means to represent the interests of its constituencies. For example, as a response to accusations, in 2022, volunteers of the GEV investigated a few enterprises producing

electrolytic manganese in multiple provinces to check their measures for pollution control.¹

From 2010 to 2016, the GEV called for the protection of ancient tamarisk woods discovered in the planned inundation zone of the ongoing Yangqu Hydropower Plant (Xie 2020, 112). Allying with fellow environmental organizations and experts, the GEV collected signatures and sent open letters to the governor of Qinghai Province and the director of the provincial environmental protection agency in 2010 and 2011. It launched an intensive media campaign in 2016 before the plant was completed. As a result, the provincial government of Qinghai announced deferred reservoir filling and its plan to protect the woods. In October, the GEV found the project had yet to obtain approval for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and reported to the MEP, the Qinghai provincial government, and the Central Environmental Protection Inspection Team multiple times². These actions led to the temporary suspension of the construction of the plant. In August 2018, the Qinghai provincial government announced a plan for ex-situ conservation.³ However, many experts doubted whether tamarisk trees could survive under the plan. Wang Yongchen and several experts and reporters soon visited the site of tamarisk woods and tried to persuade the Qinghai provincial government and the constructor to abandon the plan. They also collected the signatures of ten renowned CAS academicians to oppose the plan.⁴ These efforts partially stymied the proceeding of the plan. Only a few tamarisk trees were moved in 2018 and 2019. In 2020, the assessment institution of Yangqu Hydropower Plant published an EIA report, which recommended a mixed method of ex-situ conservation and in-situ conservation.⁵ After a

¹ See the GEV's investigation report at <https://www.chinagev.org/huanjingguancha/26.html>, accessed June 12, 2023.

² See Wang Yongchen's weblog on September 7, 2017, available at http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_4ed9bee60102xdel.html, accessed September 13, 2019.

³ See online news at <http://news.bjx.com.cn/html/20180808/919397.shtml>, accessed September 13, 2019.

⁴ See Wang Yongchen's address at the Environmental Salon for Journalists held in October 2019. The text is available at <http://chinagev.org/index.php/greenpro/huanjingjizhe/6739-20191027hy001>, accessed December 11, 2020.

⁵ The EIA report is available at <https://www.mee.gov.cn/ywgz/hjyxpj/jsxmhjyxpj/xmslqk/202003/W020200313620019213107.pdf>, accessed December 11, 2020.

few years, the experiments on the ex-situ conservation proved to be successful because those moved tamarisk trees grew well.⁶ As a result, the ex-situ conservation gained the upper hand. The NDRC approved resuming the construction of the plant in November 2021.⁷ The GEV and allies successfully held the Yangqu hydropower project back for more than a decade until a win-win solution was achieved, which serves as a good case for its mode of policy influence.

In addition to joining some policy activities launched by other environmental organizations, the GEV initiated many actions to influence policies, especially those related to constructing hydropower plants, such as Mugecuo, Yangliuhu, and Tiger-leaping Gorge⁸ (Mertha, 2008; Mertha 2009, 1005-1006; Xie 2009, 2; Han 2014, 179-180). Yangqu Hydropower Plant is just a recent example. Among these actions, the most far-reaching event is the Nu River anti-dam action (Wang 2006, 55; Johnson 2009, 70-71; Wang and Wang 2012, 120). Litzinger (2007), Lu (2007), Lin (2007), Mertha (2008, 110-149; 2009, 1002-1005), Sun and Zhao (2007, 132-144; 2008), Yang and Calhoun (2008, 81-84), Buesgen (2008), Xie (2009, 97-105), Johnson (2009, 122-125), Wang (2010, 339-347), Han (2011), Xie (2011, 217-220), Matsuzawa (2011, 2020), Wells-Dang (2012, 136-168), Wang and Wang (2012, 120-122), Teets (2014, 114-115), Han et al. (2014), and Hsu C. (2017, 140-142) document part of the campaign, while this research provides a general picture and covers the most recent updates of the case.

The GEV and the Nu River Anti-Dam Activism

From 2003 to 2016, the prolonged process of this event can be broken down into three stages. In March 2003, the Yunnan provincial government and China Huadian Corporation, a state-

⁶ See SFA news at <http://www.forestry.gov.cn/c/xby/ynyw/504899.jhtml>, accessed June 12, 2023.

⁷ The approval document is available at https://www.ndrc.gov.cn/xxgk/zcfb/pifu/202112/t20211209_1316577.html, accessed June 12, 2023.

⁸ Mugecuo and Yangliuhu are in Sichuan Province, while Tiger-leaping Gorge is in Yunnan Province.

owned large-scale power generation enterprise, signed a letter of intent to build a hydropower plant composed of two reservoirs and 13 dams on the Nu River, China's last free-flowing major river. In August, Mou Guangfeng, then chief inspector of the supervision department of the MEP and a friend of some prominent environmentalists, informed Wang Yongchen and other environmentalists that the NDRC approved the project (Lu 2007, 61; Xie 2009, 101; Sullivan and Xie 2009, 426; Mertha 2009, 1004; Xie 2011, 219; Matsuzawa 2020, 682). This message awakened these environmentalists because a month ago, UNESCO recognized the Three Parallel Rivers of Yunnan Protected Areas—the Nu River, the Lancang River, and the Jinsha River—as a World Natural Heritage Site. Cooperating with sympathetic experts, the media, and other environmental organizations, such as the FON, the GVB, and the Green Watershed in Yunnan Province, the GEV started the long battle at a meeting held by the MEP in September. Signature campaigns followed. Domestically, it collected many signatures, including those of some celebrities, at a CECPA conference and the Third China-U.S. Environmental Forum, held in October and November, respectively. Internationally, the GEV and other organizations gathered signatures, including those of then Thai Prime Minister Thaksin and UN Under-Secretary-General Topfer, at the Second International Meeting of Dam-Affected People and Their Allies held in Thailand in December 2003 and the Fifth UN Civil Society Forum held in South Korea in March 2004. The Thailand signatures were submitted to UNESCO. In its response, UNESCO expressed its concerns about the Nu River. In the following years, it maintained pressure on the issue. In January 2004, Li Xiaoxi, a volunteer of the GEV and a representative of Haidian District People's Congress, penned a letter to then-Premier Wen Jiabao. In the next month, Wang Yongchen led a team to tour the critical part of the Nu River and then held a photography exhibition in Beijing. In March, representatives of environmental organizations submitted several proposals to NPC representatives and CPPCC

members to stop the project. Numerous media outlets intensively covered all these actions, quickly boosting the activism into a nationwide and international event (Chen 2009, 46-47). In February 2004, Wen Jiabao commented on the NDRC report, demanding discreet study and scientific decision, which, in fact, shelved the project. It was the first stage of the event.

The second stage was from 2005 to 2012. Pro-dam forces struck back by twisting the discourse. They invited Fang Zhouzi, a well-known grassroots fighter against pseudoscience and fraud, and influential scientists, such as He Zuoxiu, a CAS academician, and Lu Youmei, an academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering and former chief of the Three Gorges project, to visit Yunnan, and then started a heated debate with environmentalists. While anti-dam activists emphasized such issues as migrants' welfare, economic feasibility, and safety and insisted on potential damages to the natural environment, local ethnic cultures, and biodiversity, pro-dam forces alleged the effects of poverty alleviation and environmental protection, in addition to power generation and economic development. They ratcheted up "the rhetoric to undermine the credibility of the hydropower critics" (Mertha 2008, 134). Imitating environmentalists, He and Lu sent the State Council a letter recommending the acceleration of the Nu River project. It was said that they received a response from the State Council, stating "the matter needs adjustment." In July 2005, Wen Jiabao directed relevant agencies to speed up their studies on the issue.⁹ Emboldened by the State Council's backing off, it was believed that the MEP secretly approved the EIA of the project.¹⁰ In 2006, a vice minister of the MEP admitted that the Nu River project would be significantly modified. It was said the new plan was to scale down the project to one reservoir and four dams (Mertha 2008, 140-141). At the end of 2007, the NDRC approved one of the dams—

⁹ See Xu Xiaoying, Is the Nu River Defense Battle Reversed? Originally published in Business Watch Magazine (*Shangwu Zhoukan*), October 21, 2005. It is available at <http://news.sohu.com/20051021/n227267192.shtml>, accessed November 17, 2017.

¹⁰ According to the author's interview with Wang Yongchen on July 28, 2012, in Beijing, the MEP never acknowledged that it approved the EIA of the Nu River project.

the Liuku Dam.¹¹ In those years, preparatory work, such as surveying, drilling, and building roads, had started along the Nu River's trunk stream. Even worse, numerous small hydropower plants had been under construction on its tributaries.

Dissatisfied with informational deficiency, the GEV and its allies penned an open letter requesting public disclosure of the EIA report of the Nu River project in August 2005. Drafted by Ma Jun, would-be founder of the Institute of Public and Environmental Affairs (IPE), the letter was eventually signed by more than 90 organizations and 450 individuals and submitted to the State Council, the NDRC, and the MEP. The GEV, the FON, and the IPE wrote another open letter to the NDRC and the MEP in February 2008, making the same request. However, both letters received no response. In 2006, the GEV applied administrative reconsideration to the MEP, which turned out to be unfruitful. In June, four volunteers from three organizations¹² sued the MEP at the First Intermediate People's Court of Beijing, requesting revocation of the EIA and prohibition of all preparatory work on the Nu River. Unfortunately, the court rejected the case.¹³ In addition to launching campaigns in Beijing, Wang Yongchen conducted many field investigations. From 2004 to 2018, Wang had completed 18 field trips to the Nu River basin. Experts, reporters, and other environmentalists in her expedition team played important roles in the event. In 2006, the GEV finished 100 interviews and surveys of potential dam migrants and lobbied CPPCC Standing Committee members based on the results.¹⁴ In early 2008, two experts, Liu Shukun and Ren Yuling, sent two letters to Wen Jiabao after participating in the GEV's tour in the Nu River basin, stating their objection to the dam project. As a then-active CPPCC Standing Committee member and a State Council counselor, Ren Yuling was particularly influential. Another block was the Wenchuan

¹¹ Wang Yongchen confirmed this information with the author during the interview.

¹² Zhang Junfeng and Wang Ruiqing were from the GEV. Yao Yao was a volunteer of the FON. Jin Jiaman is the founder and executive director of the Global Environmental Institute (GEI).

¹³ The author's interview with Wang Yongchen on July 28, 2012, in Beijing.

¹⁴ In 2018, the GEV revisited these 100 families in another field trip.

earthquake in May 2008, which exposed the potential risk of the Nu River project. A month after the earthquake, 52 experts and 18 environmentalists appealed to the central government to reevaluate the safety of large-scale dam projects in unstable Southwest China (Brewer, 2008; Wang 2010, 346). In March 2009, the GEV lobbied a few NPC representatives and CPPCC members to submit proposals regarding suspending the Nu River project (Wang and Wang 2012, 122). In the next month, Wen Jiabao ordered a pause of the Liuku Dam. In 2011, two geologists, Sun Wenpeng and Xu Daoyi, submitted a letter to Wen Jiabao through Wang Jirong, then one of the deputy directors of the Environment Protection and Resources Conservation Committee of the NPC, after consulting with the GEV and completing a field trip to the Nu River. It seemed their argument of the significant geological risk of the project convinced Wen Jiabao. In the same year, he suspended the project for the third time.

Feeling the necessity of unification, 13 bottom-up environmental organizations held a conference in Hangzhou in 2010 to discuss the issue of water protection. More organizations joined the mechanism after that. In 2012, a new alliance called the China River Watch Alliance (CRWA) was formed, and its council and secretariat were established. Wang Yongchen has served as the president of its council, and the secretariat has been installed in Green Zhejiang, an environmental organization in Zhejiang Province. By December 2017, when the CRWA held its seventh national conference, it had recruited 66 organizations and issued three declarations. Each of these 66 organizations promised to watch one river in China.¹⁵

The third stage was from 2013 to 2016. In January 2013, the State Council issued the twelfth “five-year plan” for energy development. The NDRC prepared the plan and included the Nu River project. However, Xi Jinping launched an extensive anti-corruption campaign in 2013.

¹⁵ According to online news at <https://kknews.cc/zh-sg/news/xve6zpq.html>, accessed September 14, 2019.

Liu Tienan, then vice minister of the NDRC and director of the National Energy Administration under the NDRC, was investigated and deposed in May. One year later, four more senior officials in the NDRC were removed because of corruption. Furthermore, Bai Enpei, former Party Secretary of Yunnan Province and one of the NPC's deputy directors of the Environment Protection and Resources Conservation Committee, fell in August 2014. Losing crucial sponsors, the Nu River project stayed only on paper. Wang Yongchen also made positive comments on these personnel changes.¹⁶ In addition to stressing environmental protection, side effects of the new top leadership's anti-corruption campaign derailed the Nu River project. Another decisive macro factor was the slowdown of the Chinese economy and the accompanying oversupply of electric power, which made the Nu River project less lucrative for both the constructor and local governments. In 2014, the GEV submitted a proposal to the CPPCC via an acquaintance, recommending local economic development based on ecological and cultural conservation rather than building hydropower plants. It seemed local governments accepted this idea. In early 2016, Li Jiheng, then Party Secretary of Yunnan Province, announced a plan to cease all small hydropower projects in the Nu River basin and construct a national park in the region (Matsuzawa 2019, 113). However, it was said that the National Energy Administration included the Nu River project again in drafting the thirteenth "five-year plan" for energy development. In response, Wang Yongchen contacted the Administration directly in May. Dissatisfied with its replies, the FON, the GEV, and five other environmental organizations sent an open letter to the Administration and the NDRC in June 2016, requesting the publicity of relevant plans and the suspension of the Nu River project. In August, the FON organized a symposium to discuss the infeasibility of the project. In the meantime, the GEV and other organizations launched another wave of media reports on the issue. The National

¹⁶ See her weblog at http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_4ed9bee60102wixd.html, accessed November 18, 2017.

Energy Administration issued the thirteenth “five-year plan” for energy development in December 2016, in which the Nu River project disappeared (Matsuzawa 2019, 113; Matsuzawa 2020, 685). Environmentalists deem it another milestone in protecting China's last free-flowing major river. As of mid-2023, there had been no news of restarting the project.

This is a typical case of critical pluralism. Tackling a politically sensitive anti-dam issue, the GEV and some other environmental organizations took a critical attitude toward multiple state actors, including local governments, relevant agencies in the central government, and a state-owned enterprise. In the whole process, environmental organizations applied more radical approaches to influence policies, such as writing open letters, filing an administrative lawsuit, applying for information disclosure and administrative reconsideration, and launching signature campaigns by mobilizing their constituencies. They relied on building coalitions composed of experts, domestic and international celebrities and political leaders, the media, other organizations, and even some sympathetic officials to exert influence. Wang Yongchen admitted the coalitions could be loose and temporary.¹⁷ She made efforts to build more stable and institutionalized coalitions, such as the CRWA. The anti-dam forces reached out to collect and articulate opinions of those who could potentially be affected by the project, including those living in downriver countries, and tried to influence policies based on these opinions. In the prolonged process, the anti-dam forces failed to stop the agenda and formulation of the policy at first. However, they successfully deferred and finally blocked its implementation by reevaluating the policy in a different way. Other unexpected factors, such as the Wenchuan earthquake, the anti-corruption campaign, and the slowdown of the economy, also took effect at critical junctures. In the third

¹⁷ The author's interview with Wang Yongchen on July 28, 2012, in Beijing.

stage, they successfully influenced not only the formulation of the thirteenth “five-year plan” for energy development but also the agenda for local development. However, despite their persistent actions to stop the Nu River project, they failed to stop numerous small hydropower plants built on its tributaries (Wang et al. 2015, 1484). Sometimes, the anti-dam forces might ultimately fail. For example, in June 2009, the GEV and 23 other organizations sent a letter to the MEP supporting its temporary suspension of the Ludila and the Longkaikou hydropower plants on the Jinsha River and calling on total suspension of all dam projects in the middle and lower reaches of the Jinsha River. However, according to Wang Yongchen, the MEP secretly approved their EIAs later, and the two dams were eventually completed.¹⁸ Despite the GEV’s critical attitude toward the state, it does not oppose the state generally, especially the top leadership of the Party-state. On the contrary, the GEV built good relationships with individual officials in the MEP, such as Pan Yue and Mou Guangfeng. The MEP once invited the GEV to discuss revising the Environmental Protection Law. Yet its relationship with the MEP has cooled down since these friendly officials were marginalized in the ministry.¹⁹

Characteristics of critical pluralism are also found in the following organizations and cases. Because of the limited space, this chapter will not provide a detailed analysis of each case.

8.1.2 Policy Influence of Friends of Nature (FON)

Founded in 1994 by Liang Congjie, the FON has been the flagship of Chinese NGOs to influence public policies (Qiaoan 2022, 10). It has played a role in almost all well-known environmental events and initiated such significant policy actions as the protection of Yunnan snub-nosed monkey and the Tibetan antelope, the relocation of the Shougang Group, and the intervention in the Yuanmingyuan Lakebed Anti-seepage Project (Ru 2004; Sun and Zhao 2008,

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

147-151; Hildebrandt and Turner 2009, 97; Wang 2010, 11-17; Wang and Wang 2012, 26-33; Hatch 2014, 57; Teets 2014, 161; Teets 2018, 135-136; Xie 2020, 90-91; Xu 2020, 156-157, 162-168; Li P. 2021, 279-280; Zhuang et al. 2022, 339-340, 344-345). With the worsening of Liang's health and the resignation of Xue Ye, former director-general of the FON, in 2006, the FON entered low tide for a period (Tai 2015, 62). At the end of 2007, Liang Xiaoyan, one of the co-founders of the FON, returned to the FON as acting director-general and presided over the enactment of a new strategic plan, in which promoting public participation, representing the underprivileged, and influencing environmental policies became primary organizational goals (Xie 2020, 82). After hiring Li Bo as the director-general in January 2009, the FON focused on several issues, including municipal solid waste, the reevaluation of EIAs of publicly traded companies, and low-carbon transportation. As the FON gradually returned on the right track, influencing policies has been normalized in its daily work (Wang and Wang 2012, 32-37). It created a particular Legal and Policy Advocacy Department. In 2011, it tried filing the first EPIL. In addition to traditional campaign-style participation in public environmental events, the FON pays more attention to employing institutional channels, and more full-time staff members are increasingly becoming specialized and professionalized (Zhuang et al. 2022, 342).²⁰ Liang Congjie passed away in October 2010. Although "he brought many resources away from the FON,"²¹ its daily work was not affected much. Zhang Boju became the director-general of the FON in August 2013. Under his leadership, influencing policies, promoting public participation, and environmental education were reaffirmed as three core businesses of the organization. In 2013, the FON registered Friends of Nature Foundation, which has started to fund the FON's core projects. More importantly, it launched more intensive actions to influence policies, and filing EPILs has become one of its regular working

²⁰ The author's face-to-face interview with Chang Cheng, then deputy director-general of the FON, on July 24, 2012, in Beijing.

²¹ Ibid.

areas. After six years of efforts to prevent the Xiaonanhai Hydropower Project, the FON and fellow environmental organizations eventually won the battle in 2015. In 2021, Liu Jinmei, former director of the FON's Legal and Policy Advocacy Department, succeeded Zhang Boju as the director-general of the FON. The new leadership added climate change to its focal areas and filed a few relevant EPILs.

The FON maintains the mode of critical pluralism to influence policies. It has engaged in many politically sensitive environmental issues. For example, in 2012, the FON and 25 other organizations and 96 individuals co-signed and sent a letter to a court in Hainan Province, calling for the acquittal of an environmental activist, Liu Futang, who was prosecuted for conducting illegal business operations after trying to stop the construction of a large-scale coal-fired power plant in Hainan. However, the FON also maintains relatively good relationships with the government and has had more and more interactions with the official system in recent years (Froissart 2019, 221-222). It registered with the Chaoyang District Bureau of Civil Affairs in 2010.²² The FON and multiple official institutions had joint projects and mutual invitations in the following years. For example, in 2016, it conducted a research project regarding the enactment of the Law on the Prevention and Control of Soil Pollution designated by the MEP (Xie 2020, 93; Zhuang et al. 2022, 347); in 2019, the FON and nine other organizations signed a contract with Beijing People's Procuratorate for cooperation in public interest litigations (Xu and Byrne 2021, 626); in 2020, the MEP invited the FON to discuss the fourteenth "five-year plan" for environmental protection.

²² In addition to the FON, the GEV, the IPE, the GEI, the Green Beagle Environment Institute (Green Beagle), and the Environment Friends Research Center for Science and Technology (EFRC) registered with the Chaoyang District Bureau of Civil Affairs. According to the author's interviews with leaders of these organizations, open-minded government officials in the Chaoyang District of Beijing helped them register. In addition, good relationships between the district government and registered organizations benefited organizations that sought registration here later.

8.1.2.1 The FON and the EPIL System

The FON is the most active bottom-up advocate for establishing the EPIL system and the leading bottom-up practitioner to file EPILs. Submitting a proposal to the CPPCC in 2005, Liang Congjie was one of the pioneers who advocated for legal innovation (Xu 2020, 183; Qiaoan 2022, 1, 83-84). In 2011, the FON and the Green Volunteer League of Chongqing filed the first EPIL in Yunnan province against a chemical company that illegally dumped large amounts of chromium residue and polluted water bodies. It was the first EPIL initiated by bottom-up environmental organizations in China (Hatch 2014, 58; Qie 2014, 96; Teets 2018, 136; Plantan 2018, 162; Shapiro 2019, 137; Xie 2020, 95). In 2012, the two organizations respectively sent letters to the Standing Committee of the NPC calling for a change of the article relevant to EPILs in the Civil Procedure Law that was under revision. Eventually, the article was replaced in a favorable way for environmental organizations. While revising the Environmental Protection Law, the FON drastically criticized each version of the draft and submitted its proposals to the NPC via online portals, open letters, and face-to-face meetings. It also tried to amplify its voice by holding symposiums, launching media campaigns, and rallying other environmental organizations (Lin 2018, 8-10; Froissart 2019, 215-219; Xu 2020, 181-182; Qiaoan 2022, 1-2, 87-88). The final version in April 2014 was a significant improvement in terms of qualifications for filing EPILs, compared with the second version in June 2013 and the third version in October 2013, which granted the right only to the ACEF or national-level environmental organizations that registered with the MOCA, respectively. The FON played a key role—probably more important than the ACEF—in enlarging qualified organizations (Plantan 2018, 163). Integrating ideas of various organizations, the FON submitted a long suggestion letter to the Supreme People’s Court regarding the enactment of the aforementioned judicial interpretation promulgated in January 2015 (Lin 2018, 11), and it participated in consultation meetings held by the Supreme People’s Court. Like the

ACEF, it received an acknowledgment letter from the court (Froissart 2019, 219-221; Xu 2020, 183).

Right after the new Environmental Protection Law took effect on January 1, 2015, the FON and Green Home of Fujian filed an EPIL in Nanping City of Fujian Province against four mine operators who damaged a piece of woodland (Gao 2018, 65-66; Plantan 2018, 163). The two bottom-up environmental organizations were confirmed eligibility to file the EPIL and won the case in the same year (Fürst 2016, 220; Zhai and Chang 2018, 378; Xu 2020, 186-187). By the end of 2021, the FON had filed 51 EPILs, including two administrative litigations. Multiple aspects of environmental protection, including air, water, and soil pollution, ecological damage, and wildlife conservation, had been involved in these cases, and a few large-sized state-owned enterprises, such as China National Petroleum Corporation, Shenhua Group, Ansteel Group, State Grid, and State Power Investment Corporation, had been sued. The aforementioned case of “Changzhou Foreign Language School’s toxic site,” jointly filed by the CBCGDF and the FON, generated positive results for environmental organizations but remains contentious. When dealing with these cases, the FON discovered various policy issues and tried to influence relevant policies accordingly. In 2016, the FON submitted a proposal to the Beijing Municipal Conference of the CPPCC criticizing the poor implementation of the Regulations of Beijing Municipality on Wetland Protection. In 2020, it questioned two articles in the Marine Environment Protection Law and advocated for the eligibility of bottom-up environmental organizations to file maritime EPILs.

In recent years, the FON has increasingly employed the method of filing EPILs to intervene in public environmental events. It sued China National Petroleum Corporation in 2015 to stop its widely opposed oil refinery project in Yunnan. The following year, it sued a company in Shenzhen and the management company of Nanling Nature Reserve for their damage to the area. The most

influential case occurred in 2017 when the FON filed an EPIL in Yunnan Province to stop the Jiasa River Hydropower Plant construction (Chu, 2023). The planned inundation zone of the reservoir includes habitats of a few endangered species, especially the green peafowl, under first-class state protection. Before filing the lawsuit, the FON and two other organizations had sent an open letter to the MEP and held a symposium in Yunnan. The MEP organized a meeting for stakeholders to discuss the issue in May. Consequently, the construction of the plant was suspended. In the following two years, the FON launched multiple activities and media campaigns to raise public awareness of the event. The first trial was held in August 2018. In March 2020, the Kunming Intermediate Court adjudicated that the project should be suspended until the developer completes a new EIA per the requirements of the MEP. Dissatisfied with the judgment, both the FON and the developer appealed to the Yunnan High Court. At the end of 2020, the Yunnan High Court dismissed the appeal of both sides and upheld the original judgment. This case resembles the case of Xiaonanhai, which will be presented in this subsection. Filing EPILs is a new approach used in the Jiasa River case. Court judgments officially stalled the project but granted the MEP final decision-making authority. In the following years, the developer never carried out a new EIA and eventually terminated the project (Chu 2023, 462). As the first preventive EPIL aiming to protect wild animals in China, the Supreme People's Court included this case in the ten typical cases in 2021 (Chu 2023, 457). The same year, the UN Environment Programme listed the case as one of the ten global biodiversity legal protection cases (Zhuang et al. 2022, 343).

In addition to filing EPILs by itself, the FON established a “supporting fund for EPILs” with the support of Jack Ma’s Alibaba Foundation (Fürst 2016, 220; Zhai and Chang 2018, 393-394; Shapiro 2019, 138; Economy 2019, 178) and an “EPIL action network” in 2014 to facilitate other organizations to file EPILs (Teets 2018, 136; Xu 2020, 183-184). Incorporating 65

environmental organizations, 52 lawyers, and some influential legal and environmental experts, the network is increasingly playing an important role in improving the EPIL system.²³

8.1.2.2 General Policy Efforts of the FON

The FON is also the champion of influencing environmental policies in general. Since 2005, it has published the China Environment Yearbook every year to conclude green development in the previous year and discuss important environmental issues, which inspired the FON's research projects and advocating agenda (Shapiro 2019, 124; Xu 2020, 159-160). For example, the disclosure of extravagant water consumption in Beijing successfully influenced the revision of the Regulations of Beijing Municipality on Water Conservation. Since 2008, the FON has started a regular mechanism to facilitate NPC representatives and CPPCC members to prepare and submit environment-related proposals. Many of these proposals stemmed from the yearbooks (Tai 2015, 117). Some of these proposals influenced policymakers. For instance, a proposal regarding municipal solid waste to the CPPCC in 2011 triggered a special investigation organized by the Proposals Handling Committee of the CPPCC. The FON was invited to participate in the whole process of the investigation, including direct communications with relevant officials of the MOHURD and the NDRC.²⁴ By 2015, the FON had submitted dozens of proposals to the NPC and the CPPCC at multiple administrative levels.²⁵ From 2017 to 2021, it submitted another 32 proposals to the NPC and the CPPCC.²⁶ As of 2022, the FON had tried to influence the enactment or revision of more than 50 national environmental policies.²⁷ It systematically collects and

²³The FON's 2018 annual report, available at http://www.fon.org.cn/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=13554:2018&Itemid=119, accessed October 1, 2019.

²⁴ The author's email interview with Zhang Boju in August 2012.

²⁵ The FON news, http://www.fon.org.cn/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=10473:2015-see&Itemid=111, accessed November 20, 2017.

²⁶ The FON's 2017-2021 annual reports, available at https://www.fon.org.cn/about/information?nav=5&cate_id=1&org_id=1, accessed June 14, 2023.

²⁷ See Liu Jinmei's address regarding the FON's policy actions, available at <https://www.fon.org.cn/action/way/content/395>, accessed June 14, 2023.

scrutinizes policy information and tries to participate in the process by attending relevant policy meetings and responding to public opinion solicitations initiated by the NPC, the State Council, the Supreme People's Court, relevant agencies, and local governments. To influence some critical environmental policies, it may hold symposiums and mobilize other organizations or the public by collecting and articulating their opinions and launching media campaigns. In addition to those policies related to the establishment of the EPIL system, the FON made great efforts to influence the revision of the Atmospheric Pollution Prevention and Control Law, the Law on the Prevention and Control of Water Pollution, the Law on the Prevention and Control of Environment Pollution Caused by Solid Wastes, the Law on the Prevention and Control of Environmental Noise Pollution, the Forestry Law, the Regulations on Nature Reserves, and the Regulations on Open Government Information. It also tried to influence the enactment of the Law on the Prevention and Control of Soil Pollution, the Law on Yangtze River Conservation, the Wetland Conservation Law, the Law on Yellow River Conservation, the National Park Law, the Regulations on Groundwater Management, and Administrative Rules on the Recall of Vehicles for Environmental Protection, to name a few. After viewing the FON's proposals to revise the Law on the Prevention and Control of Water Pollution in 2016, Wang Canfa, a famous environmental lawyer and the founder of the Center for Legal Assistance to Pollution Victims (CLAPV), commented to a reporter that those professional and constructive proposals showed significant progress grassroots environmental organizations had made in the past ten years.²⁸

The FON also seeks to influence local environmental policies. For example, in 2017, the FON submitted its proposals in the revision of the Regulation of Jiangsu Province on Prevention and Treatment of Water Pollution in the Tai Lake; in 2018, it tried to influence the revision of the

²⁸ http://www.thepaper.cn/newsDetail_forward_1491903, accessed November 21, 2017.

Regulation of Shandong Province on Prevention and Control of Water Pollution; in 2020, it submitted proposals for enacting the Regulation of Jilin Province on the Protection of Ecological Environment; in 2021, it tried to influence enacting the Implementation Measures of Anhui Province for the Law on the Prevention and Control of Soil Pollution. Since 2014, the FON and Green Beagle have mobilized residents along the Qing River, a local river in northern Beijing, to monitor the river's water quality regularly. Based on their observation, the FON issued a report in 2015 and organized salons in 2016 to communicate with official participants from multiple municipal agencies. It also submitted several proposals to the Beijing Municipal Conferences of the NPC and the CPPCC in the same year. This project was expanded to 30 rivers in 17 cities in 2019. In the process, volunteers filed hundreds of accusations to local authorities.²⁹

Regarding outcomes of the FON's policy proposals, some were accepted, while others were denied. In some cases, it had no influence at all. For example, the FON called for revising the Environmental Impact Assessment Law in May 2016. However, the NPC quietly revised the law in July without public participation, controversially repealing the priority of the EIA (Economy 2019, 174). For another example, although the FON had advocated for the revision of the Wild Animal Conservation Law for many years and actively participated in its revising process, the revised law adopted in July 2016 excluded all proposals of the FON (Qiaoan 2022, 95). In 2020, the NPC decided to revise the Wild Animal Conservation Law again in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The FON invited NPC representatives, legal experts, and scientists to hold a webinar in which thousands of people participated. Before that, The FON and eight other organizations conducted online surveys and then submitted their proposals to the NPC. The revised law, adopted in 2022, includes some new articles, such as distinguishing captive-bred wild animals from free-

²⁹ See the FON's 2018 and 2019 annual reports and self-introduction of its history at <https://www.fon.org.cn/story/history>, accessed June 14, 2023.

living wild animals in their natural habitats, stricter measures to control hunting, and prohibiting eating protected wild animals and terrestrial wild animals. Only some of them are consistent with the FON's proposals. In addition to the Wild Animal Conservation Law, some of the FON's proposals were adopted in the Law on the Prevention and Control of Soil Pollution.³⁰

8.1.2.3 The FON and Municipal Solid Waste Policies

As mentioned above, municipal solid waste has become one of the FON's focusing issues since 2009. In the first several years, it adopted relatively mild methods, such as conducting research projects, holding symposiums and forums, responding to public opinion solicitations, and submitting NPC and CPPCC proposals, to advocate for front-end processing, mainly waste sorting, cycling, and reduction. Since 2012, it has started to employ more aggressive approaches to monitor back-end processing, mainly waste incineration. In 2012, the FON and fellow organizations applied to 76 local bureaus of environmental protection for the disclosure of information on 122 waste incineration plants (Johnson 2015, 88). The report in 2013 disclosed rampant excessive emissions and nonfeasance of government agencies. They issued an open letter calling for new industrial standards and improved information disclosure. In 2014, these organizations applied to more than 100 local bureaus of environmental protection for information on 160 waste incineration plants. In the process, they also employed applications for administrative reconsideration. Based on the project report in 2015, the FON held a symposium and issued another open letter. In 2015-2016, this project expanded to 231 waste incineration plants in China. Based on the third report in 2016, the FON submitted a proposal to the CPPCC and directly sent a letter to the MEP with 16 environmental organizations, suggesting stricter enforcement and the inclusion of all 231 plants in the list of "key state-monitored enterprises." In 2019, the FON and the IPE issued two reports

³⁰ See a report of the China Environment News at http://epaper.cenews.com.cn/html/2020-05/27/content_94369.htm, accessed June 14, 2023.

monitoring the environmental responsibilities of 428 waste incineration plants. Such unprecedented serial campaigns exerted great pressure on the government, especially the MEP, and led to policy changes. In July 2013, the MEP promulgated two departmental rules to regulate self-monitoring and supervisory monitoring of “key state-monitored enterprises” and relevant information disclosure (Dai 2019, 37). A year later, the MEP revised the Standard for Pollution Control on Municipal Solid Waste Incineration, enacted in 2001 and shelved in the revision process from 2010. In response to the 2016 letter from environmental organizations, the MEP called the FON and informed the latter that their suggestions were under serious consideration.³¹

Because the NDRC is another agency taking charge of solid waste policies, the FON also tried to influence its policies. In 2013, the NDRC suddenly lifted a 14-year ban on disposable foam dinnerware. Concerned about its pollution and safety, the FON applied for information disclosure to the NDRC, the MOC, and the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology six times and applied for administrative reconsideration to the NDRC in July. In 2013 and 2016, the FON drastically criticized the twelfth and thirteenth Five-year Plans for the Construction of Facilities for Harmless Treatment of Municipal Household Waste promulgated by the NDRC, demanding overhauls of these plans. In 2014, the NDRC added the technology of waste incineration power generation to the list of key low-carbon technologies promoted by the state. After collecting signatures from 46 organizations and 208 individuals, the FON sent an open letter to the NDRC questioning the appropriateness of this change. However, all these efforts turned out to be unfruitful. In contrast to the MEP, the NDRC attaches more importance to economic development than environmental protection, which may result in its indifference to many opinions of environmental organizations.

³¹ See an online report of the Legal Daily, available at http://www.legaldaily.com.cn/index/content/2016-08/28/content_6781039.htm?node=20908, accessed November 21, 2017.

It is worth mentioning that the FON has coordinated with members of China Zero Waste Alliance (CZWA), a network to improve waste management composed of 70 organizational members and 23 individual members as of 2018 (Lu and Steinhardt 2022, 112), to conduct many of these activities. The FON has been one of its major initiators and supporters since its establishment in 2011. At the end of 2016, the FON started to serve as the CZWA's secretariat, and Tian Qian, former director of the FON's municipal solid waste program, became its secretary-general.

8.1.2.4 Monitoring Enterprises

Monitoring enterprises has been another focus issue of the FON since 2008. In the first few years, the FON concentrated on reevaluating the EIAs of publicly traded companies because the MEP periodically conducted these EIAs and disclosed intensive information.³² The FON wrote multiple suggestion letters to the MEP and the China Securities Regulatory Commission to argue against polluting enterprises' applications of going public or refinancing, including those of some large-sized state-owned enterprises, and successfully prevented a few of their motions. The campaign against the application by the Gold East Paper Company to list its 'A' shares on the Shanghai Stock Exchange was just an example (Johnson 2009, 156-161; Zhan and Tang 2013, 390-391; Xu 2020, 173-177). In the same period, the FON joined the Green Choice Alliance (GCA), a network of environmental organizations initiated by the IPE in 2007 and devoted to monitoring enterprises' environmental management of their supply chains (Johnson 2009, 151-156; Johnson 2011, 408-409; Johnson 2015, 83-85; Fürst 2016, 193-194; Aikawa 2017, 189-191; Shapiro 2019, 135; Xu 2020, 109), and acted as one of its key members. However, in June 2021, the FON quit the GCA because of its insufficient resources to verify reports of the GCA.³³

³² The author's email interview with Chang Cheng in August 2012.

³³ See the FON's announcement at <https://www.fon.org.cn/news/203>, accessed June 14, 2023.

Funded by the Society of Entrepreneurs & Ecology Foundation (SEE Foundation), the FON and the IPE have focused on promoting comprehensive disclosure of information about major polluting enterprises since 2013. Cooperating with a group of environmental organizations, they urged local environmental agencies to publicize current and historical data of major polluting enterprises systematically. In 2014, these organizations researched 4,416 air-polluting enterprises listed on 28 provincial platforms for information release and applied to these provincial environmental bureaus to disclose further information. Based on the results, they sent a suggestion letter to the MEP in 2015. To date, monitoring major air/water polluting enterprises has become routine work for these organizations, which the SEE Foundation mainly funds as the project of Blue Defenders (*Wei Lan Xia*).

From 2012 to 2015, the FON's local volunteers measured public buildings' temperatures in multiple cities for four consecutive summers to check the policy effects of the 26°C Air Conditioning Energy-saving Campaign. The FON called violating companies and submitted suggestions to local governments according to the results. In 2015 and 2016, it joined an investigative group composed of ten environmental organizations to examine implementing the policy of restricting plastic bags coming into force in 2008. In May 2017, the FON reported the illegal land reclamation project of Sanya's new airport to the State Oceanic Administration. In response, the agency suspended the project in July and disapproved its EIA at the end of the year. In January 2018, the State Oceanic Administration promulgated stricter measures to regulate land reclamation practices.

8.1.2.5 A Classic Case of Intervening in Public Environmental Events

The FON intervened in quite a few public environmental events. Although it used institutional channels in many cases, as introduced before, traditional campaign-style participation is still a prominent way. The FON's anti-dam activism to prevent the Xiaonanhai (Little South Sea)

Hydropower Plant was a classic case. Wells-Dang (2012, 159), Liu and Ding (2014), and Qiaoan (2022, 78-83) record part of the campaign, while this research provides more details and covers the most recent updates.

The FON and the Battle of the Xiaonanhai Hydropower Plant

As mentioned in the Comprehensive Utilization Plan of the Yangtze River Basin (the River Plan hereafter), approved by the State Council in 1990, the Xiaonanhai Hydropower Plant would be built at the Xiaonanhai section of the Yangtze River, located in Chongqing Municipality. After 16 years of stagnancy, Chongqing Municipality and China Three Gorges Corporation signed an agreement to implement the project in August 2006. After Bo Xilai assumed the office of Party Secretary of Chongqing in November 2007, Chongqing had been intensively pushing the project forward. However, the environmental stakes of the project were much higher in those years. The construction of multiple dams on the Yangtze River, such as the Gezhouba and Three Gorges dams, has significantly compressed the living space of many fish species, including some rare species (Liu and Ding 2014, 235-238). To mitigate the adverse effect, the Upper Yangtze River Rare and Endemic Fish National Nature Reserve (the reserve hereafter) was established in 2005. As the only national-level fish reserve on the Yangtze River, it is the last refuge for more than 70 rare and endemic freshwater fish species, and its free-flowing water is especially critical for migratory fish species and floating eggs. However, the reserve had been reduced in size by adjusting its boundaries to make space for the Xiluodu and Xiangjiaba dams when it was established in 2005 because no dams are allowed in core and buffer zones of nature reserves according to the Regulations on Nature Reserves. Unfortunately, the planned Xiaonanhai dam is just inside the reserve, and its reservoir will flood the buffer zone, possibly causing a catastrophic mass extinction

of many fish species (Liu and Ding 2014, 238-239).

To circumvent the barrier, Bo Xilai pushed for another reduction of the reserve. At first, only the NDRC supported the project, while all other relevant agencies were skeptical about or opposed it. Chongqing set up a project office, and one of its objectives was to convert opponents. Bo personally persuaded officials from the MEP, the MOA, and the Ministry of Water Resources. The Environmental Protection Bureau of Chongqing went to Beijing four times a month to coordinate the project.³⁴ In light of the agreement of these agencies, the Xiaonanhai project appeared in the 2009 government work report of Chongqing. The MOA approved Chongqing's special research report and an adjustment plan of the reserve in the same year, which would also need the MEP's approval. In the meantime, the NDRC revised the River Plan. The Xiaonanhai project remains in its final version, approved by the State Council in 2012.

Environmental organizations did not notice the Xiaonanhai project until May 2009, when eight biologists, including Lü Zhi and Xie Yan, issued an open letter expressing their concerns over the project. In August, the FON sent a letter to the Chongqing government calling for abandoning the project (Qiaoan 2022, 78). It was said that the National Nature Reserve Review Committee (the committee hereafter) organized by the MEP would vote for the adjustment plan of the reserve in November. As a response, in October, multiple environmental organizations and experts cosigned a letter drafted by the FON to the committee members, requesting their careful consideration of the adjustment. In the next month, the FON and five other organizations sent an application to the MEP, demanding their presence at the committee's annual meeting as observers.

³⁴ See the following media reports and articles: Ten Years' Environmental Game of Xiaonanhai Hydropower Plant: Bo Xilai ever Pushed for It, an online report of Tencent's Prism, available at <http://finance.qq.com/original/lenjing/xiaonanhai.html>, accessed November 22, 2017; Is Xiaonanhai Project Vetoed? An online report from thepaper.cn by Zhou Chen and Ding Yufei, available at http://www.thepaper.cn/newsDetail_forward_1320053, accessed November 22, 2017; Ten Years' Resistance War between the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Xiaonanhai by Liu Yiman, Southern Metropolis Daily, April 13, 2015; Xiaonanhai Hydropower Plant: A Typical Case of Power Expansion by Liu Yiman and Ding Zhouyang, China Environment Yearbook (2013), pp.153-164.

The MEP informed the FON the next day that the meeting would not discuss the reserve.³⁵ After a quiet year, to the FON's surprise, the committee held a closed-door meeting in November 2010, at which members of the committee unanimously approved the adjustment plan, which significantly downsized the reserve again to allow for the Xiaonanhai project (Liu and Ding 2014, 241; Qiaoan 2022, 79).

Disappointed environmental organizations asked for a public hearing in December, but the MEP never responded. In January 2011, the MEP officially made the adjustment public with minimal information disclosure. In addition to submitting its letter of opposition, the FON mobilized more than a thousand people through the Internet to send in opposition letters. With the help of the GEV, Zhang Kangkang, a CPPCC member, submitted a proposal regarding the project to the annual CPPCC conference, and journalists brought leaflets into the conference hall.³⁶ The FON also sent an open letter to the NPC representatives and CPPCC members to draw their attention to the issue (Qiaoan 2022, 79). In the meantime, the FON applied to the MEP to disclose the research report, the proposal for the adjustment, members' comments, and minutes of the committee meeting. The MEP responded that the meeting had no minutes, and the MOA formed the report and the proposal. In February, the FON applied to the MOA to disclose the two documents. The ministry denied the disclosure in March with the excuse of information under processing, citing an article in the Opinions on the Work of Application-based Disclosure of Government Information, promulgated by the State Council in 2010. In the same month, the FON applied for administrative reconsideration to the MOA and brought forward an application to review the legality of the article in the State Council's policy document. In May, the MOA upheld

³⁵ The author's face-to-face interview with Chang Cheng on July 24, 2012, in Beijing.

³⁶ The author's interview with Wang Yongchen on July 28, 2012, in Beijing.

its previous decision and refused to process the other application.³⁷ After consulting legal experts, the FON applied to the State Council for a final ruling in June, including reviewing the legality of the article (Wang 2016, 243). However, the State Council never responded.³⁸ On the contrary, it approved the reserve adjustment at the end of 2011.

In February 2012, Chongqing received the NDRC's approval for the preparatory work of the Xiaonanhai project. Changjiang Water Resources Protection Institute would conduct the EIA of the preparatory work, also known as *santong yiping*—the access to water, electricity, roads, and land leveling. Coordinating with seven organizations, a few experts, and hundreds of online supporters, the FON sent a letter to the institute, urging it to assess the environmental and social costs of the project objectively. However, the EIA report was publicized quickly without mentioning any impacts on fish species, and the Environmental Protection Bureau of Chongqing also approved the report soon.³⁹ At this moment, the CCP's top leadership suddenly removed Bo Xilai from his post on March 15. However, to environmentalists' surprise, this abrupt event did not seem to influence the Xiaonanhai project. Despite the FON's effort of submitting another CPPCC proposal to oppose the project, Huang Qifan, then Deputy Party Secretary and Mayor of Chongqing, presided over the cornerstone laying ceremony of the project on March 29, 2012, and a migration plan was formulated in April. On April 5, 18 environmental organizations and some experts jointly sent an open letter to the State Council and Chongqing Municipal Government, calling for stopping the Xiaonanhai project (Qiaoan 2022, 79). In June, Wu Xiaoqing, then deputy minister of the MEP, indicated the ministry paid attention to the opinions of the media and social organizations on the project, and the EIA application of the Xiaonanhai dam had not been

³⁷ The author's face-to-face interview with Chang Cheng on July 24, 2012, in Beijing.

³⁸ According to the author's face-to-face interview with Chang Cheng and the Last Report of China's Rivers, p. 77.

³⁹ The author's face-to-face interview with Chang Cheng on July 24, 2012, in Beijing.

submitted.

Comparing the Xiaonanhai activism with the Nu River activism, Chang Cheng, then deputy director-general of the FON, pointed out three reasons for environmentalists' defeat: the absence of allies within the official system, the lack of international pressures, and insufficient support from local organizations because of Bo Xilai's inclination of coercion. He worried Huang Qifan would push the project forward despite Bo's leave.⁴⁰ However, environmentalists might have underestimated Bo's influence on this project and overestimated Huang's capacity to promote it. Without Bo's impetus, the Xiaonanhai project has stagnated since the cornerstone-laying ceremony. All the preparatory work and migration stopped, and the EIA of the dam was never submitted to the MEP. The reluctance of China Three Gorges Corporation to implement the project is another reason because the cost per kilowatt installed capacity for the Xiaonanhai project will be much higher than that of other dams on the Yangtze River.⁴¹ In March 2014, Cao Guangjing and Chen Fei, board chairman and general manager of the corporation respectively, were transferred to other posts by the central Party leadership, further stalling the Xiaonanhai project. Nevertheless, environmental organizations did not relax their vigilance. At the end of 2012, the CRWA held a conference in Chongqing and issued a declaration to sponsor the Xiaonanhai activism. One year later, 19 environmental organizations released the Last Report of China's Rivers, which systematically examines hydroelectric development in China and explicitly calls for renouncing both the Nu River and the Xiaonanhai projects.⁴² In 2014, the FON submitted a proposal to the NPC annual meeting suggesting the cancellation of the Xiaonanhai project.⁴³

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ See Is Xiaonanhai Project Vetoed? An online report from thepaper.cn by Zhou Chen and Ding Yufei, available at http://www.thepaper.cn/newsDetail_forward_1320053, accessed November 22, 2017; Ten Years' Resistance War between the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Xiaonanhai by Liu Yiman, Southern Metropolis Daily, April 13, 2015.

⁴² The document is available at https://www.internationalrivers.org/sites/default/files/attached-files/final_rivers_report_20140218_small.pdf, accessed December 18, 2017.

⁴³ The FON's 2014 annual report, available at <https://pan.baidu.com/s/1c04dWRI>, accessed December 18, 2017.

In early 2015, Huang Qifan mentioned that the Xiaonanhai project would be started in Chongqing's annual government work report. To prevent its revival, the FON and SHANSHUI Conservation Center (Shanshui) jointly issued an open letter to all NPC representatives and CPPCC members, requesting them to urge relevant agencies to relinquish the project. This time, they received echoes from the official system. Liu Qiang and Xu Jin, mayors of the upstream cities of Lu Zhou and Yi Bin, respectively, unambiguously opposed the construction of the Xiaonanhai project, citing its adverse effects, such as harbor siltation, to their cities (Qiaoan 2022, 79). At this moment, Chen Jining, former President of Tsinghua University, was appointed the minister of the MEP and sent out pro-environment messages.⁴⁴ At the end of March, the MEP issued its approval of the Wudongde Hydropower Plant, which prohibits any construction of dams inside the Upper Yangtze River Rare and Endemic Fish National Nature Reserve (Qiaoan 2022, 79). The FON and other environmentalists deem it a milestone in preventing the Xiaonanhai project, although it is still listed in the River Plan. After six years of efforts, the FON and fellow environmental organizations had made the Xiaonanhai project only stay on paper.

In January 2016, Xi Jinping held a symposium in Chongqing to push for developing the Yangtze River Economic Belt. Xi accentuated restoring the Yangtze River's ecological environment and prohibited large-scale development projects in the belt. At the end of the year, Huang Qifan resigned. Since then, the official agenda has obviously excluded the Xiaonanhai project. In 2019, the NPC started to enact the Law on Yangtze River Conservation, the first special law to protect a river basin in China. The FON submitted its proposals to the NPC in 2020, stressing protecting the habitats of wild animals and plants in the basin. The law was adopted at the end of the year. Consistent with the FON's proposals, multiple articles of the law prescribe measures to

⁴⁴ Ten Years' Resistance War between the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Xiaonanhai by Liu Yiman, Southern Metropolis Daily, April 13, 2015.

protect wild animals and plants in the basin.

8.1.3 Other Environmental Organizations Adopting Critical Pluralism

8.1.3.1 Policy Influence of the IPE and A Brief Discussion of Organizational Alliances

Founded by Ma Jun in 2006, the IPE has been a strong ally of the GEV and the FON and supported many of their policy initiatives, including the Nu River and Xiaonanhai actions and the revision of the Environmental Protection Law. However, the IPE is a more technology-oriented organization. Since its founding, its primary business has been articulating and analyzing environmental information publicized by governments and enterprises (Hildebrandt and Turner 2009, 95; Johnson 2009, 147-149; Johnson 2011, 406; Fürst 2016, 145-151; Aikawa 2017, 189-190; Chiashi 2017, 172; Economy 2019, 177; Huang 2020, 167-168; Haddad 2021, 180-181). Based on the resulting databases, it has created the Blue Map website and the Blue Map app displaying historical and real-time information on air and water quality, carbon emission, and pollution source records of more than 300 cities located in 31 province-level administrative regions (Xu 2020, 106-107, 192; Sun and Yan 2020, 2149). The IPE also uses these tools to communicate with millions of users to mobilize and accept pollution source reports (Matteo and Zimmermann, 2017; Xu 2020, 203-208; Sun and Yan 2020, 2152-2155; Haddad 2021, 186). In 2019, artificial intelligence was introduced into the Blue Map app, further enhancing its reporting function. In 2020, the IPE developed a COVID-19 map to facilitate combating the pandemic. As Matteo and Zimmermann (2017, 207-208) point out, the mission of the IPE fits within the “regulation by revelation” paradigm, i.e., the organization complements state regulations by making environmental violations more visible.

The GCA serves as another platform on which the IPE coordinates 58 environmental

organizations⁴⁵, including some renowned organizations such as the GEV, the EFRC, and Green Beagle. The GCA has promoted green supply chains of enterprises in the industries of information technology and textiles since 2010 and extended the program to the real estate industry in 2016 (Chiashi 2017, 172-173; Xu 2020, 192-201; Haddad 2021, 182-185). By 2020, the GCA further extended the program to 20 industries. In 2015, the IPE and the U.S.-based NRDC invented the Corporate Information Transparency Index to assess brands' environmental management of their supply chains in China. By 2022, the index had covered 650 brands.⁴⁶ In 2018, the IPE created the Supply Chain Climate Transparency Index to monitor the carbon emissions of enterprises' supply chains. By 2022, the index had covered 1000 enterprises in 30 industries.⁴⁷ The IPE has also picked up the FON's project of monitoring the environmental performance of publicly traded companies in recent years (Haddad 2021, 185-186). In 2020-2021, it created a "dynamic ranking of publicly traded companies' environmental performance." In 2018, the IPE developed a system for evaluating enterprises' environmental credit risk, which has been accepted by Postal Savings Bank of China since 2020.⁴⁸

With the NRDC's help, the IPE created the Pollution Information Transparency Index (PITI Index) in 2009 to evaluate local governments' disclosure of pollution source information. Cooperating with the NRDC and some local environmental organizations—most are within the GCA, the IPE has evaluated more than 100 cities yearly since 2009 (Percival and Zhao 2013, 178; Shapiro 2019, 133; Economy 2019, 177). To conduct the project, the IPE or relevant individuals applied to many local bureaus of environmental protection for the disclosure of information, which

⁴⁵ See the introduction of the GCA at <http://www.ipe.org.cn/GreenSupplyChain/download.html?isfile=1>, accessed October 4, 2019.

⁴⁶ See a report of the IPE at <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/27V5urhNAp84EinMofnUjQ>, accessed June 15, 2023.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ See 2020 and 2021 annual reports of the IPE. The IPE's 2016-2021 annual reports are available at <https://www.ipe.org.cn/reports/Reports.aspx?cid=18331>, accessed June 15, 2023.

exerted pressure on them and led to some disputes (Johnson 2011, 406-408; Wu and Xu 2013, 94-95; Fürst and Holdaway 2015, 45; Wang 2016, 239; Sun and Yan 2020, 2150-2151). After completing the evaluations, the IPE sometimes invited dozens of directors of these bureaus to discuss the results and lobby for improvements (Fürst 2016, 151-155; Xu 2020, 111-113).⁴⁹ As Johnson (2015, 87) points out, this innovative initiative made non-governmental actors hold local governments accountable for their compliance with transparency requirements. Anderson et al. (2019) also find that this initiative enhances municipal governments' compliance with central mandates to disclose information about the management of pollution.⁵⁰ Deriving from this project, the IPE, the FON, and the SEE Foundation initiated the project of "comprehensive information disclosure of air polluting sources" in 2013 (Sun and Yan 2020, 2151), which was incorporated into the project Blue Defenders later. Many environmental organizations within the GCA joined the project. Since 2013, the IPE has facilitated some NPC representatives and CPPCC members to submit proposals regarding environmental information disclosure annually. The IPE and other organizations also frequently sent policy suggestions to the MEP and its local bureaus. Combined with policy actions of the FON and the CZWA introduced before, these efforts resulted in the aforementioned MEP departmental rules and favorable articles in the revised Atmospheric Pollution Prevention and Control Law. By the end of 2015, 31 province-level administrative regions had established online platforms to publicize real-time data on major polluting enterprises.⁵¹ In 2020, the General Office of the CCP Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council promulgated Guiding Opinions on Constructing Modern Environment

⁴⁹ The author's interview with Wang Jingjing, then deputy director of the IPE, on August 2, 2012, in Beijing.

⁵⁰ The quantitative analysis of Seligsohn et al. (2018) finds that the impact of public transparency on environmental enforcement outcomes is unclear. Information disclosure, albeit useful, is not enough for the citizenry to hold the government accountable.

⁵¹ See the IPE's 2015 annual report, available at <http://www.woa.ipe.org.cn/Upload/201603310503241632.pdf>, accessed November 24, 2017.

Governance System, one article of which requires polluting enterprises to publicize relevant information, including pollutants, method of discharge, and pollution control standards and facilities. The MEP issued two policy documents to implement this requirement the following year. These are significant policy outcomes the IPE pursued. In 2020, the IPE introduced a new solid waste map using public information, including information on over a thousand waste incineration or landfill enterprises. It also created a Garbage Sorting Index to evaluate the performance of 22 cities. The index had covered 100 cities up to 2022. More importantly, it started to apply for information disclosure to those cities that did not publicize relevant information in 2021. In the same year, the Beijing Municipal Government invited the IPE to attend a symposium discussing waste sorting in Beijing.⁵²

In fact, the IPE has conflicts with some local governments instead of the central government.⁵³ In addition to the two projects mentioned above, another project called “blue sky route map” surveils the disclosure of air quality information in selected cities and provinces, exerting pressure on these governments. However, these interactions might also cultivate good relationships, e.g., the Hebei Provincial Government invited the IPE to participate in drafting the Regulations of Hebei Province on Public Participation in Environmental Protection in 2014. The IPE maintains a good relationship with the central government. In 2019, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology organized the China Green Supply Chain Alliance and invited the IPE to join the Special Committee of Green Finance of the alliance.⁵⁴ In 2021, the IPE cooperated with the Chinese Research Academy of Environmental Sciences, an institution directly affiliated with the MEP, to develop the Indices of Carbon Peaking and Carbon Neutrality at the provincial

⁵² See the IPE's 2021 annual report.

⁵³ The author's interview with Wang Jingjing on August 2, 2012, in Beijing.

⁵⁴ See the IPE's 2019 annual report.

level and the city level.⁵⁵

In the field of environment, organizational alliances were usually task-oriented and unstable, i.e., coalitions would dissolve after completing certain actions. The China Rivers Network organized in the Nu River campaign was an example.⁵⁶ Hildebrandt and Turner (2009, 101) also point out that cooperation among green groups was not as strong as it perhaps should be, and cooperation outside the environmental sector was even rarer. Hu et al. (2016) found that all nonprofit alliances formed in the wake of the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake dissolved. In recent years, however, environmental organizations have been inclined to build more concrete and stable alliances to achieve long-term goals. Once an alliance's secretariat is situated in a leading organization, it may live longer and be more influential. The CRWA, the CZWA, and the GCA are such examples. Tackling the issue of climate change, the China Civil Climate Action Network is another relatively stable alliance composed of 39 organizations as of 2020.⁵⁷ Its secretariat is established in China Association for NGO Cooperation, a top-down organization under the MOC stretching across multiple fields including environmental protection (Schroeder 2015, 112-119). As introduced above, the CZWA and the GCA, led by the FON and the IPE, respectively, have taken more substantial actions to influence policies and achieved more policy outcomes. In 2019, 12 organizations, including Shenzhen Zero Waste, the IPE, the FON, Nature University, the ACEF, and the CBCGDF, formed a new alliance called Chemical Safety Network to establish a management system for hazardous chemicals and wastes. The secretariat of this alliance is composed of individual members from different organizations.⁵⁸ Several years after its founding,

⁵⁵ See the IPE's 2021 annual report.

⁵⁶ According to the author's interviews with Wang Yongchen on July 28, 2012, in Beijing, and Feng Yongfeng, founder of Green Beagle and Nature University, on July 31, 2012, in Beijing.

⁵⁷ See its introduction at <http://www.cango.org/plus/view.php?aid=215>, accessed June 15, 2023.

⁵⁸ See its introduction on the website of Shenzhen Zero Waste at <http://toxicsfree.org.cn/html/6851094937.html>, accessed June 15, 2023.

the alliance had not conducted many activities. It seems a pivotal organization in a network is crucial for its survival and development. Furthermore, individual organizations and organizational networks may strengthen each other in influencing policies. Limited by space and resources, this research can only briefly touch on the topic of organizational alliances. These organizational alliances' functions and relationships with individual organizations deserve further study.

8.1.3.2 Policy Influence of Green Beagle and Nature University

Cooperating with a few environmental organizations, Feng Yongfeng, a former journalist of Guangming Daily, created the project of Nature University in 2007 to conduct environmental education. In 2009, Feng founded Green Beagle and incorporated Nature University into the organization. In 2012, he registered Nature University as an independent organization with the official name of Beijing Fengtai District Headstream Lover Environment Institute. According to Feng, Green Beagle had actively responded to many public opinion solicitations for policymaking and often cosigned policy actions initiated by other organizations.⁵⁹ It cooperated with the FON to conduct projects like waste incineration and investigation of rivers in Beijing and joined the GCA to support the IPE's promotion of green supply chains. It also took over the GVB's project investigating mercury cosmetics, informing the SFDA and its provincial branches of the results (Huo 2014, 47). Many provincial branches replied to Green Beagle's letters, and the SFDA even invited Green Beagle to attend a meeting.⁶⁰

Green Beagle also had its own policy initiatives and made achievements to some degree. It was the leading civil organization conducting public environmental testing of air quality and heavy metals and contributed to incorporating the PM2.5 indicator into the compulsory monitoring system (Zhang and Barr 2013, 70-77; Huo 2014, 46-48; Xu, 2014; Johnson 2015, 90; Hsu 2017,

⁵⁹ According to the author's interview with Feng Yongfeng on July 31, 2012, in Beijing.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

139; Shapiro 2019, 126; Qiaoan 2022, 74-78). Therefore, it was discontented with the ongoing Regulations on the Administration of Environmental Monitoring (Opinion-soliciting Draft), which banned public monitoring of environmental quality and limited public participation. In 2011, it collected signatures of 20 other environmental organizations and sent a letter to the State Council and the MEP, demanding to delete relevant articles (Huo 2014, 50). In 2019, the MEP drafted the Regulations on Monitoring Ecological Environment as a replacement policy. The draft not only legalizes public monitoring but states that governments should support and encourage the participation of qualified social institutions in monitoring the ecological environment.⁶¹ However, as of 2022, the legislation was still waiting for the approval of the State Council.⁶² In 2012, Green Beagle facilitated an NPC representative to submit a proposal suggesting the ban of shark fins at official feasts. The same year, it sent a letter to the Shenzhen Municipal Government to advocate for the first “zero shark fin city” in China after collecting signatures from 100 organizations and individuals. The CCP Central Committee and the State Council revised the regulation in December 2013, banning shark fins and other high-end ingredients at official feasts (Li and Shapiro 2020, 169). In 2020, Shenzhen Municipal People’s Congress passed a regulation that bans eating protected animals and all terrestrial wild animals (Barber and Hathaway 2022, 81). Unfortunately, the regulation does not include sharks. In 2012, Green Beagle applied to the MEP to disclose the information on the nationwide discharge of polychlorinated biphenyls, toxic chemical compounds (Wang 2016, 236, 244). After the MEP rejected both the original application and the administrative reconsideration, Green Beagle sued the MEP in a court in Beijing. Eventually, the MEP communicated with Green Beagle to reach a compromise. After it provided an unclear list, Green

⁶¹ The text of the draft is available at <https://img1.17img.cn/17img/files/202002/attachment/64ab9bde-75b9-4ac4-8207-68a9b245cba3.pdf>, accessed June 16, 2023.

⁶² See a report from Huang Runqiu, the minister of the MEP, at an NPC Standing Committee meeting in 2022, available at <http://www.npc.gov.cn/npc/c30834/202204/7235ffaa4b1547a3860e7196c80b003a.shtml>, accessed June 16, 2023.

Beagle withdrew the allegation.⁶³

Since 2013, Nature University has replaced Green Beagle as an active policy advocate. Admitted by Wang Yongchen, it joined the campaign to combat the pollution in the Tengger Desert by conducting field investigations, applying for government disclosure of information, and upholding media coverage of the event.⁶⁴ Nature University also played an active role in the revision of the Environmental Protection Law (Froissart 2019, 218-219). The most impressive actions of Nature University were its persistent efforts to apply for disclosure of various environmental information to governmental agencies at multiple administrative levels and filing administrative lawsuits (Huo 2014, 48). It partially won some cases while losing others. For example, in those cases against environmental bureaus of Beijing and Guangzhou and the Forestry Administration of Guangdong Province, although the courts judged those agencies should reply to Nature University's applications again, they were not ordered to disclose the information the organization requested. Nature University completely lost in those lawsuits against the environmental bureau of Hangzhou and the Forestry Administration of Anhui Province. Supported by the CLAPV, Nature University filed two EPILs in 2013. The FON and Nature University jointly sued two companies under the Shenhua Group, but the court eventually rejected the case. The other case could be traced back to 2012 when Nature University applied for the disclosure of information about Guizhentang, the largest pharmaceutical company that breeds bears and extracts bile from live bears to produce drugs. Nature University found that the Forestry Administration of Fujian Province had granted the company "the certificate for domestication and breeding" and "the certificate for processing" and then applied for administrative reconsideration to the SFA, requesting revoking "the certificate for domestication and breeding." In 2013, it filed

⁶³ The author's interview with Feng Yongfeng on July 31, 2012, in Beijing.

⁶⁴ See Wang's blog at http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_4ed9bee60102vxh5.html, accessed November 17, 2017.

administrative EPILs to the Gulou District Court and the Intermediate Court of Fuzhou, demanding the abolition of “the certificate for processing.” In April, the SFA rejected its application. Both courts also refused to accept the cases later with the excuse of disqualification of the plaintiff. Although the cases did not proceed, they set a precedent for protecting wildlife through EPILs. Guizhentang failed to get listed on the stock market twice due to strong opposition from many institutions and individuals (Li P. 2021, 173, 177). By 2019, Nature University had filed more than 20 EPILs.⁶⁵ In July 2018, Feng Yongfeng was accused of sexual assault and admitted his misbehavior. As a result, several foundations, except the CBCGDF, stopped funding Nature University.⁶⁶ However, Nature University continued filing EPILs after the event. The Supreme People’s Court included one of its EPILs regarding ecological damages in the fifteen typical cases for biodiversity protection in 2022. It also continued its program of saving animals used for entertainment, launched in 2016. In 2019, it applied to the SFA to disclose information about approving animal performance and lobbied the agency to enact the Anti-animal Abuse Law.⁶⁷ In 2020, Nature University submitted proposals to the NPC suggesting forbidding wild animal performance in revising the Wild Animal Conservation Law. However, in the revised law adopted in 2022, wild animal performance is still allowed. The only improvement is that the law prescribes that such performance should be regulated, and animals should be kept healthy.

8.1.3.3 Policy Influence of the ARB

Founded by Wu Tianyu and 168 volunteers in 1988, Animal Rescue Beijing (ARB) is China's first bottom-up animal rescue organization that has devoted itself to protecting companion animals, farm animals, and wild animals. With the help of the Haidian District Bureau of Civil

⁶⁵ See its introduction at <http://www.toxicsfree.org.cn/html/0439254027.html>, accessed June 16, 2023.

⁶⁶ See online news of China Philanthropy Times at <http://www.gongyishibao.com/html/yaowen/14505.html>, and the CBCGDF news at <http://www.cbcdgdf.org/NewsShow/4950/8166.html>, accessed October 5, 2019.

⁶⁷ See the program’s microblogging platform at https://www.weibo.com/u/3888639146?refer_flag=1005055014_&is_hot=1, accessed October 6, 2019.

Affairs, it acquired its legal status later by nominally affiliating with the Haidian District Association of Senior Forestry Scientists and Technicians. To sustain the ARB, Wu Tianyu has donated all her personal assets, including her only apartment, to this organization.⁶⁸

Based on field investigations conducted by volunteers, the ARB persistently advocates for special legislation to promote animal welfare and incorporate it into schools' educational plans. It also advocated for the revision of the Wild Animal Conservation Law. In addition to submitting proposals to the NPC and the CPPCC via personal relations, it frequently contacted the NPC, the State Council, and relevant agencies, including the MOA, the SFA, the MEP, and the MOE, through letters, phone calls, and petitions. It also collected signatures when conducting roadside activities dozens of times.⁶⁹ Unfortunately, these efforts have not resulted in many policy outcomes. There is still no special legislation for animal welfare, and it is not included in any educational plans, albeit more and more environmental organizations, experts, NPC representatives, and CPPCC members have joined the endeavor in recent years (Li P. 2021, 227; Whitfort 2021, 72; Wu and Nie 2021, 185; Barber and Hathaway, 2022). The MOA made the General Code for Evaluating the Welfare of Farm Animals in 2017, and the Ministry of Science and Technology made the General Code for the Welfare of Laboratory Animals in 2020. They are not enforceable in practice as non-mandatory industrial standards, although they are the first two official documents focusing on animal welfare. The revised Wild Animal Conservation Law in 2022 only partially reflects the ARB's opinions.

However, some policy efforts of the ARB turned out to be fruitful. Its influence on Beijing's dog policy is a good example. Before 1995, privately raised dogs were completely banned in many big cities in China, including Beijing (Li K. 2023, 81-82). As early as 1990, the ARB started to

⁶⁸ The author's interview with Wu Tianyu on July 30, 2012, in Beijing.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

lobby for repealing the policy after conducting investigations of rabies. Amid a campaign to eliminate dogs launched by the Beijing police, Wu Tianyu staged a sit-in protest with a dozen pet lovers outside of the building of the Beijing Public Security Bureau and organized a collective petition at the Beijing Municipal Government later.⁷⁰ In 1994, the Beijing Municipal People's Congress promulgated the Provisions of Beijing Municipality on Strictly Limiting Dog Raising. Taking effect in 1995, it recognized privately raised dogs and created a dog registration system. Many cities gradually followed suit (Li P. 2021, 311-312). However, dog raisers were not satisfied with stringent restrictions, such as minimal dog walking time and the nearly unaffordable registration fee of 5,000 yuan. To relax these restrictions and lower the registration fee, the ARB drafted the Regulations on Dog Raising and sent it to the Beijing government and proposed it at Beijing Municipal Meetings of the NPC and the CPPCC. It also mobilized supporters to call the mayor's hotline insistently. In addition, Wu Tianyu brought this issue to two popular television programs to amplify their voice.⁷¹ In 2003, the Beijing government promulgated the Provisions of Beijing Municipality on the Administration of Dog Raising, which allows unlimited time for dog walking and lowers the registration fee to 1,000 yuan. After this victory, the ARB continued representing the interests of dog owners and trying to influence relevant policies. In 2013, it launched a media campaign to promote the rights of blind persons and their guide dogs in the wake of the experiences of Chen Yan, a visually impaired volunteer of the ARB, and her guide dog, who was always refused to enter public transportation. The campaign attracted the attention of the CDPF. It soon joined the campaign and pushed for policy changes with bottom-up organizations. In May 2015, Beijing Railway Operations Safety Regulations and Several Provisions on the Use of Railways for Visually Impaired Travelers and Their Guide Dogs (for Trial Implementation) were

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

implemented. Guide dogs for visually impaired persons have since gained the right to enter Beijing subways and the national railway transportation system.

As these cases show, the ARB could be highly critical of governments. During the outbreak of SARS in 2003, many local governments mistakenly launched campaigns to kill dogs and cats, enraging pet owners (Li K. 2023, 84). To persuade them that dogs and cats were irrelevant to the SARS virus, the ARB made many phone calls to local governments and urged various local organizations and volunteers to call or send letters to their governments. After more than a month, the slaughter was stopped. Opposing the SFA's auction of hunting rights in 2006, the ARB drafted an open letter and collected signatures. It activated drastic criticisms through online forums and even obtained support from abroad. Eventually, the SFA rolled back the policy.⁷²

However, the ARB could maintain relatively good relationships with a few government organs, including those the ARB criticized. For example, cooperating with the Beijing Public Security Bureau, the ARB once conducted projects to sterilize and immunize rural dogs, which won positive feedback from the police.⁷³ Its relationships with other environmental organizations are also good. As introduced above, the ARB coordinated with other bottom-up animal protection organizations to influence policies. Sometimes, it supported signature campaigns launched by other environmental organizations. Liang Congjie was a former acquaintance of Wu Tianyu, and the ARB participated in the FON's action to protect the snub-nosed monkey in the late 1990s.⁷⁴ The ARB cooperated with many environmental organizations in universities to disseminate the idea of animal welfare and organized the Chinese Universities Union for the Protection of Animals in 2009. The ARB provided union members with materials for incorporating animal welfare into

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

schools' educational plans and directed them to submit those materials to local education administrative agencies.⁷⁵ Currently, the ARB's volunteers in different locations of the country sometimes expose and report illegal activities related to animals and monitor local governments' disposal of those offenses.

8.1.3.4 Policy Influence of the CSAPA, the AITA Foundation, and the Union of Grassland

China Small Animal Protection Association (CSAPA) is another active animal rescue organization founded by Lu Di in 1992. Thanks to Lu's personal connections, the organization registered with the MOCA, and the MOA has served as its sponsoring unit (Li P. 2021, 270, 277, 282-283),⁷⁶ allowing it to establish branches and enroll members nationwide. Because it originated from the grassroots and has independent funding sources and management, it is generally identified as a bottom-up organization.

Compared with the ARB, the CSAPA focuses more on protecting companion animals and influences policies in a somewhat less radical manner. However, it still falls into the category of critical pluralism. Influencing Beijing's dog policy was also one of the CSAPA's primary policy goals, and it had cooperation with the ARB on this issue.⁷⁷ After its founding, Lu Di petitioned the Beijing Municipal Government to repeal the "total ban policy." During the drafting process of the Provisions on Strictly Limiting Dog Raising, the CSAPA held seven symposiums and sent a letter to the municipal government with more than 2,000 signatures. After implementing the policy, it continued to hold symposiums to lobby for relaxing restrictions and lowering the registration fee. In 1996, it surveyed Beijing residents' attitudes toward dog raising, the first survey of this issue in China. In 2007, it conducted another survey of dog raising and rabies at four villages in suburban

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

Beijing and sent a report with suggestions to the Beijing Public Security Bureau. The same year, it sent a letter regarding dog raising and rescuing homeless cats to the municipal government. In 2013, it sent another letter to the municipal government, suggesting using dog breeds instead of shoulder heights as the standard for prohibition in the Provisions on the Administration of Dog Raising.

The CSAPA also tried to influence the policies of other cities. For example, it criticized the Regulations of Harbin Municipality on the Administration of Dog Raising in an open letter to Harbin Municipal Government in 2012. It often contacts various local governments to stop their slaughtering dogs. For example, cooperating with some local organizations for animal protection and legal experts, the CSAPA drastically criticized Hanzhong City's mass killing of dogs in 2009. In 2013, it sent a team to Yulin City in Guangxi to monitor and facilitate the local government's enforcement of laws during its notorious "dog meat festival" and proposed to abolish the custom. The next year, Yulin authorities withdrew official endorsement of the festival, albeit the event continued (Li P. 2021, 112). In 2021, it condemned the local government of Shangrao City in Jiangxi Province for its unlawfully killing pets of COVID-19 quarantine owners and called for establishing a national pet quarantine system.

Pushing for special legislation to combat animal abuse has become another primary policy goal of the CSAPA since 2006. It collected signatures of NPC representatives and CPPCC members to support its policy proposal in 2007 and held six relevant symposiums in the next year. From 2009 to 2010, it participated in drafting the Anti-Animal Abuse Law initiated by some legal experts of the CASS. Coordinating with more than a dozen animal protection organizations, the CSAPA issued an open letter to Xi Jinping and the NPC in 2013, calling for comprehensive legislation to protect animals. Lu Di passed away in February 2015, but the organization's

trajectory has remained unchanged. In March, the CSAPA collected signatures in multiple cities and received thousands of online votes to support the legislative initiative. In 2015 and 2016, it facilitated some NPC representatives and CPPCC members to submit proposals regarding anti-animal abuse, and it collected public signatures in Beijing and Shanghai in 2017. In 2020, it continued to call for anti-animal abuse legislation. In the same year, the CSAPA strengthened relations with other organizations for animal protection and established the National Alliance of Stray Animal Rescue.

Like the ARB, the CSAPA maintains relatively good relationships with some government organs, such as the MOA, the Beijing Municipal Government, and some local bureaus of public security, although they are subject to its criticisms occasionally.

In 2011, a group of media professionals, including some well-known TV hosts, and two domestic foundations created the AITA Foundation for Animal Protection Beijing (AITA Foundation). It is China's first and only foundation dedicated to animal protection. In the first few years, the foundation funded volunteers to conduct field investigations in zoos to find animal performance and mistreatment of animals and sent reports to relevant authorities. From 2012, it joined the endeavor to stop Guizhentang's practice of extracting bile from live bears (Li P. 2021, 150, 172-173, 177). To stop its plan of going public, AITA Foundation held a symposium and collected thousands of online signatures, including signatures of some celebrities, and sent a letter to the China Securities Regulatory Commission.⁷⁸ In 2015, it sent another letter to the commission to stop Guizhentang from getting listed on another stock block. The following year, the AITA foundation reported Guizhentang's illegal operation to multiple agencies, including the SFA and its local branches, the SFDA, and the State Administration for Industry and Commerce. It also

⁷⁸ It is according to the 2012 annual report of the foundation. Its annual reports up to 2022 are available at <https://www.tajjin.cn/Report>, accessed June 17, 2023.

conducted public opinion surveys in ten cities and published results. As introduced before, Guizhentang's efforts to get listed on the stock market failed twice in 2012 and 2016. Like the ARB and the CSAPA, the AITA Foundation took action to monitor and stop the wrongdoings of local governments. In 2014, it sent open letters to the local governments of Nanchong, Hangzhou, and Alashan, condemning their campaigns of killing dogs. It also drastically opposed the "dog meat festival" in Yulin City. In 2014, it sent a petition letter to the Yulin Municipal Government before a personal visit and applied for information disclosure in the next year. After participating in saving dogs transported by trucks on highways multiple times⁷⁹, the AITA Foundation sent a letter to the MOA suggesting the prohibition of eating companion animals. In 2021, it joined the CSAPA to call for establishing a national pet quarantine system and applied for information disclosure to the local government of Shangrao.

Based on these actions, the AITA Foundation has started to advocate for anti-animal abuse legislation since 2015. It holds symposiums and submits proposals to the NPC and the CPPCC almost every year. It also tried to influence the revisions of the Law on the Prevention and Treatment of Infectious Diseases and its implementation measures, the Regulations on the Prevention of Animal Epidemic of Guizhou Province, and regulations on the administration of dog raising in multiple cities, such as Beijing and Chongqing. However, its participation was not remarkably successful. For example, in 2015, the AITA Foundation held five symposiums for revising the Wild Animal Conservation Law. It invited officials of the NPC and relevant agencies to attend these symposiums and submitted results to these authorities. Nevertheless, the final version passed in 2016 rejected its major proposals prohibiting the commercial use of endangered wild animals and animal performance (Li P. 2021, 247-249, 258-266; Qiaoan 2022, 95). In 2022,

⁷⁹ In April 2011, activists intercepted a truck carrying dogs in Beijing. This highway rescue was the first of hundreds of similar incidents (Li P. 2021, 129).

it also held a symposium and submitted proposals to the NPC to revise the law. However, the final version adopted at the end of the year only restricts instead of prohibiting these usages of animals.

A group of environmental volunteers established the Union of Grassland in 2016. Although it registers with the Beijing Bureau of Civil Affairs, it mainly conducts projects in Western China—an experiment on zero waste community in Qinghai Province, river ecological protection, and protecting endangered animals and plants. The organization mobilizes many local grassroots organizations and volunteers to monitor pollution, poaching, and the illegal trade and usage of wild animals and encourages them to report to relevant government agencies and watch their handling of those cases.⁸⁰ Some of those cases were influential. For example, in 2019, it discovered new pollution in the Tengger Desert in Ningxia and river pollution and illegal sand mining in Gansu. Thanks to intensive media coverage, both cases became public events, and local governments properly handled them. In the same year, it facilitated the CBCGDF to apply disclosure of information about rescuing pangolins to the Guangxi Forestry Administration and file EPILs.⁸¹ After that, it filed a few EPILs against polluters, including state-owned enterprises.⁸² The Union of Grassland is opposed to hydropower plants because they damage river ecology. Its Let the Fish Swim project even received comments from Xi Jinping.⁸³ In 2021, it criticized that the draft of the Law on Yellow River Conservation neglected to limit hydropower plant construction and submitted its proposals through the CBCGDF. Such an article appears in the law adopted in October 2022. In addition, the Union of Grassland actively participated in revising the Wild Animal Conservation Law and joined the endeavor for anti-animal abuse legislation. Its proposals

⁸⁰ See an introduction of its projects at <https://love.alipay.com/donate/itemDetail.htm?name=2022120517542421048#anchor-application>, accessed June 26, 2023.

⁸¹ See its 2019 annual report at https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s?biz=MzI2NjE3ODA1MA%3D%3D&mid=2649619412&idx=1&sn=7cedad862dd80c7e52d5238e4ea0c4af&scene=45#wechat_redirect, accessed December 25, 2020.

⁸² See its microblog at https://weibo.com/u/7595068848?refer_flag=1005055013, accessed June 26, 2023.

⁸³ See online news at <https://yyx.sicau.edu.cn/info/1044/3272.htm>, accessed June 26, 2023.

regarding prohibiting eating and trading wild animals have been partially realized.

8.1.3.5 Policy Influence of Echoing Steppe, Friends of Prairie, and Ocean Protection Commune

Created by Chen Jiqun in 2000, Echoing Steppe was a website aiming to protect the grassland ecosystem and has gradually developed into an unregistered organization. To empower herders in Inner Mongolia, it translated many legal readers into Mongolian, such as the Grassland Law, the Environmental Protection Law, the Mineral Resources Law, and the Law on the Contracting of Rural Land, and distributed them among herders. It complained about some policies, such as the Grassland Law and Inner Mongolia Rules for the Implementation of Grassland Management, and called for revisions but never achieved the goal. In practice, Echoing Steppe provides legal aid to herders and helps them acquire collective land titles. The organization monitored and criticized governments' inaction and lying during this process. It sometimes discovered illegal land transactions involving collusion between government officials and business people and reported to higher authorities or even filed lawsuits. For example, it conflicted with Liu Zhuozhi, former Party Secretary of Xilin Gol League and Vice Chairman of the Inner Mongolia Government, and witnessed his sentence in 2012. Echoing Steppe has been active in fighting pollution and ecosystem damage. As early as 2001, it collected signatures and reported a paper mill's pollution of Ujimqin Grassland to Xie Zhenhua, then Minister of Environmental Protection, and received his comments. Herders eventually won the case in 2004 but lost a large piece of collective land. From 2008-2009, Echoing Steppe conducted a project to investigate the degradation of Ulagai Wetland and found that the cause of water shortage was Ulagai Reservoir's retaining water. After insistent lobbying, reporting, and petitioning for a few years, the reservoir started to release water intermittently, albeit the degradation of the wetland remains. Since 2021,

Echoing Steppe has been advocating for the demolition of the reservoir's dam.⁸⁴ Echoing Steppe cooperates with a few environmental organizations to protect grasslands. From 2005 to 2008, it established a working committee with the FON and Friends of Steppe. The CLAPV is its stable ally to provide legal aid. In 2014, it established a special fund under the Friends of Nature Foundation. Since 2015, Chen Jiqun has concurrently held the secretary-general of the Wolf Totem Grassland Special Fund under the CBCGDF. Supported by this platform, Chen Jiqun criticized the opinions of a senior SFA official and proposed to remove grassland fences and issue collective land titles to all villages in Inner Mongolia in 2018.⁸⁵ In 2019-2020, Echoing Steppe sponsored local herders' petition to the Inner Mongolia Government, requesting the revocation of illegal administrative action of Xilin Gol League to divide Ulagai Grassland.⁸⁶ In 2021, it condemned two government agencies of Inner Mongolia for their redrawing the boundaries of Ulagai Wetland.⁸⁷

Friends of Prairie (Tallinn Khan) also developed from the internet. Members of the organization elected Wu Rina, a well-known Mongolian singer, as its president in 2004. Cooperating with Echoing Steppe and the FON, it facilitated the distribution of legal readers to herders and helped them acquire collective land titles. In addition to questioning existing laws, such as the Grassland Law, it submitted proposals to respond to public opinion solicitations for new legislation. Friends of Prairie was overly critical of government organs with wrongdoings. For example, it complained that the Public Security Bureau of West Ujimqin Banner confiscated legal readers it intended to distribute and drastically criticized the Environmental Protection Bureau of Inner Mongolia for approving the EIA of a railway project in East Ujimqin Banner.

⁸⁴ See its memorabilia of Ulagai Wetland at http://www.cnsteppe.com/gol_wlg_reservoir.htm, accessed June 18, 2023.

⁸⁵ See online news at http://www.sohu.com/a/275879077_100001695, accessed October 6, 2019.

⁸⁶ See two online news pieces of Echoing Steppe at http://www.cnsteppe.com/map_cn_w20200520.htm and http://www.cnsteppe.com/map_cn_w.htm, accessed December 23, 2020.

⁸⁷ See its memorabilia of Ulagai Wetland.

Friends of Prairie frequently disclosed, censured, and reported brutal exploitation of natural resources, corruption, environmental degradation, and local governments' infringement on herders' legal rights, which enraged some authorities. As revenge, they closed its website and forced it to remain silent in 2012.

Another environmental organization that was subject to oppression is the Ocean Protection Commune, founded by Yi Wuchen in 2005. It was the first grassroots organization dedicated to ocean protection in China. In its short active period, the organization disseminated the idea of protecting oceans and marine life. It conducted investigations of ocean pollution and organized volunteers to watch the cleanliness of coastlines. In 2005, it sent a letter to CCTV suggesting the creation of an environmental channel and penned another letter to the Beijing Municipal Government advocating for legislation regarding compulsory waste sorting. In 2006, it issued an open letter to criticize the mode of coastal development adopted by Weihai City in Shandong Province. In the same year, the Ocean Protection Commune joined the action initiated by homeowners to oppose a plan to construct a nuclear power plant at Rushan City, a part of Weihai City. It collected over 5,000 signatures and sent letters to the municipal government, the provincial government, the MEP, the State Oceanic Administration, and the State Council (Tang 2018a, 20). By 2008, this action successfully stopped the plan. However, unidentified authorities had surveilled the Ocean Protection Commune and Yi Wuchen since the event. Gradually, both his personal income and organizational revenue were cut off. As a consequence, the organization ceased working for a long time, and Yi Wuchen fell into financial trouble. When the author sent emails to the organization, Yi Wuchen and a webmaster only responded ambiguously, citing their ongoing hardships.⁸⁸ From 2014 to 2016, the Ocean Protection Commune resumed limited

⁸⁸ The author's email interviews with Yi Wuchen and an anonymous webmaster of the Ocean Protection Commune on July 25 and 27, 2012, respectively.

activities for a short period. However, it did not engage in any policy actions. Since then, it has remained dormant again.

8.2 Embedded Pluralism

As introduced before, variations to influence policies exist in bottom-up environmental organizations. While organizations adopting critical pluralism have acted prominently and made significant progress, those organizations adopting embedded pluralism are not less salient and fruitful. They also benefit from the relatively tolerant atmosphere and increasingly available domestic funds. In addition, their mild stance may lead to a better chance of survival. This section will introduce these organizations.

8.2.1 Policy Influence of the CLAPV

Wang Canfa, a renowned Professor of Law at China University of Political Science and Law and an environmental lawyer, founded the CLAPV as an organization affiliated with his university in 1998. Core staff members and volunteers of the CLAPV mainly come from law professors and students at his university and several other universities and educational institutions in Beijing. With their expertise and identities in public institutions, Wang and the CLAPV have established a good reputation in public and nongovernmental sectors (Hildebrandt and Turner 2009, 96; Shapiro 2019, 137). Wang has participated in almost all critical environmental legislation since 1989 based on invitations from the NPC, the State Council, and environment-related agencies. In addition to providing written opinions and participating in face-to-face discussions, the CLAPV drafted whole legislation such as the Circular Economy Promotion Law, the ongoing Law Addressing Climate Change, and the Regulations on the Administration of Ozone Depleting Substances.⁸⁹ It also contributed to some local legislation in Beijing, Hainan, Liaoning,

⁸⁹ The author's interview with Wang Canfa on August 4, 2012, in Beijing.

Heilongjiang, and Guangdong. As a Beijing Municipal People's Congress representative, Wang continually proposed controlling smog in the city. Since 2001, the CLAPV has held annual training sessions for lawyers, judges, and environmental officials, which serves as another channel to influence policies (Fürst 2016, 164-166; Aikawa 2017, 188; Plantan 2018, 163-165). For example, Wang Canfa explained the content and legislative process of the Fisheries Law to a panel of the Standing Committee of the NPC that would inspect the implementation of the law in 2019.⁹⁰ However, although the CLAPV is an influential bottom-up environmental organization, its influence on policy outcomes is still limited. For example, the CLAPV drafted the revisions of the Law on the Prevention and Control of Water Pollution in 2005. In the legislative procedure, the MEP and the State Council deleted many articles in the draft. After Wang's strenuous lobbying of the NPC, some of these articles were restored in the adopted version in 2008.⁹¹ In 2017, this law was revised for the third time. Although environmental organizations, including the CLAPV, had made breakthroughs in the drafted version, most articles favorable to them were deleted again in the final version. Occasionally, the CLAPV brought forward drafts of whole legislation out of its own initiatives. In 2004, it submitted a proposal for Environmental Damage Compensation Law to the NPC through an acquaintance and lobbied visiting NPC officials. Although such a law is hitherto not on the NPC's legislative agenda, four articles in the CLAPV's draft had been adopted in the Law on the Prevention and Control of Environmental Pollution by Solid Wastes.⁹² The CLAPV also tried to conduct policy evaluations. For instance, in 2016 and 2017, it consecutively organized two evaluations of implementing the new Environmental Protection Law.

The CLAPV has actively implemented environmental policies by providing legal

⁹⁰ CLAPV news, available at <http://www.clapv.org/NewsContent.asp?id=1204&title=%D7%E7%D0%C2%B6%AF%CC%AC&titlecontent=NewsList&lei=106>, accessed October 7, 2019.

⁹¹ The author's interview with Wang Canfa on August 4, 2012, in Beijing.

⁹² Ibid.

assistance to pollution victims since its founding (Hildebrandt and Turner 2009, 96; Wilson 2012, 869; Aikawa 2017, 187-188; Economy 2019, 177-178). In 2010, it went further to start the commercially registered Beijing Environment Aid Law Firm (Fürst and Holdaway 2015, 46). In hundreds of environmental cases in which the CLAPV intervened, the three class action lawsuits in Shilianghe reservoir, Pingnan, and Liuzhou were influential because they involved large numbers of plaintiffs (Wilson 2012, 870; Fürst 2016, 213-218; Plantan 2018, 164). In 2018, the CLAPV helped a few families with children's blood lead poisoning obtain compensation in Hunan Province. It was the first case involving children's blood lead poisoning that had completed legal proceedings in China. As mentioned before, the CLAPV supported other environmental organizations, such as the FON, Nature University, the CBCGDF, and the ACEF, to file EPILs. It provided legal assistance in many well-known EPILs, including the aforementioned cases of Yunnan chromium residue, Nanping mine operators, Nanling Nature Reserve, Changzhou toxic site, and Fujian Guizhentang. Enrooted in the grassroots, the CLAPV represents the interests of pollution victims in its legal efforts and policy activities. Stemming from its regular training of environmental organizations and lawyers, the CLAPV developed a map platform in 2017 on which pollution victims can search environmental organizations and lawyers nationwide for legal assistance. It widely collected public opinions when drafting some laws, such as the Law Addressing Climate Change.

The CLAPV is a typical organization adopting embedded pluralism. It always takes a non-confrontational, non-critical, and cooperative attitude toward the state. As Wang Canfa stated, "governments trust the organization and committed professors in a public university, and our organization stays within our limit by avoiding drastic words; if you do not embarrass governments

and save their face, they will not treat you as an enemy.”⁹³ Relying on its status within a public university and legal expertise of staff members/volunteers, the CLAPV has built up multiple channels into the official system. For example, the MEP invited Wang Canfa to join its National Ecological Environment Protection Committee of Experts in 2019. The approach it adopts to influence policies differs from that of organizations in the category of critical pluralism. According to Wang Canfa, the CLAPV mainly influences policies by directly interacting with policymakers based on invitations, and it seldom exerts pressures on governments from outside, such as mobilizing constituencies and launching signature campaigns, although it may sometimes endorse such campaigns started by other organizations. However, the CLAPV intentionally stays away from those policy efforts involving no legal affairs and usually does not seek support from other environmental organizations in its own policy actions.⁹⁴ For instance, after discovering severe water pollution in northern Jiangsu Province in 2013, Wang chose no other alternatives than submitting a letter to the central government, which received comments from the State Council, the MEP and its Jiangsu bureau.⁹⁵ Although policymakers recognize the CLAPV and Wang Canfa, none of the participatory channels is institutionalized except Wang’s status as Beijing Municipal People’s Congress representative. As introduced before, its capacity to influence policy outcomes is also limited. The CLAPV tries to participate in all policy stages, but it can hardly go through the whole policy process of a specific policy, as Wang Canfa admitted⁹⁶. Constrained by its status as a secondary organization, the CLAPV has never acted as the plaintiff in any legal cases, including EPILs, despite its involvement in hundreds of environmental cases.

8.2.2 Policy Influence of Shanshui

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ See an online report of Southern Weekend, available at <http://www.infzm.com/content/98243>, accessed November 30, 2017.

⁹⁶ The author’s interview with Wang Canfa on August 4, 2012, in Beijing.

Shanshui is another organization created by a professor. Lü Zhi, a well-known female biologist and professor at Peking University, founded Shanshui in 2007. At first, it relied more on Peking University, but it has gradually grown into a relatively independent organization and registered with the Haidian District Civil Affairs Bureau. The identity and expertise of its founder also benefit the organization in its interactions with governments at all administrative levels and its establishment of channels into the official system.

Since its founding, Shanshui has devoted itself to biodiversity protection by pushing for the combination of both top-down and bottom-up approaches. Cooperating with local forestry bureaus, Shanshui trained hundreds of administrators from over 50 nature reserves. In Sichuan Province, it facilitated local governments to establish six new nature reserves and make one million hectares of giant pandas' habitat enlisted as a World Natural Heritage Site. In 2014, Shanshui signed an agreement with the Forestry Bureau of Sichuan Province to collaborate on ecological protection. The following year, it conducted several reforestation projects and protected collective forests to combat climate change. In 2017, it participated in enacting Sichuan Province Administrative Measures for Nature Reserves.⁹⁷ From 2016 to 2018, it helped Baishuijiang National Nature Reserve in Gansu Province design an administrative system for collective forests. In 2017, Shanshui facilitated the Qinghai provincial government to make Hoh Xil another World Natural Heritage Site.⁹⁸ In 2018, it started a cooperative project with the Beijing Gardening and Greening Bureau to restore biodiversity and conduct nature education.⁹⁹ In 2021, it extended a similar project to Shanghai.¹⁰⁰

The bottom-up approach for which Shanshui makes every effort to advocate is community-

⁹⁷ See Shanshui's 2017 annual report. Its annual reports from 2010 to 2021 are available at http://www.shanshui.org/information_type/49/, accessed June 19, 2023

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ See its self-introduction at <http://www.shanshui.org/about/shanshui>, accessed December 27, 2020.

¹⁰⁰ See Shanshui's 2021 annual report.

based conservation, mainly the Community Conservation Concession Agreement (CCCA)¹⁰¹ and traditional protection of holy mountains and lakes. Since its founding, Shanshui has successfully applied this approach in Sanjiangyuan—the region in Qinghai Province that harbors the headstreams of the Yangtze River, the Yellow River, and the Lancang River (Sanjiangyuan Project Team of Shanshui, 2014)—and southwestern mountainous areas in cooperation with local governments in Qinghai, Gansu, Shaanxi, Sichuan, and Yunnan. In some localities, this approach generated policy impacts. For example, in 2016, Guanbagou became the first community-based conservation area in Sichuan Province. Local government issued policy documents to sustain and regulate it. In 2018, the Sichuan provincial government recommended extending the model to the whole province. Since 2011, Shanshui has held annual forums named Sanjiangyuan’s New Hope and invited officials from multiple central agencies relevant to biodiversity conservation and their provincial branches and relevant local governments to discuss technical as well as policy issues (Sanjiangyuan Project Team of Shanshui 2014, 194-195). According to Shanshui’s 2017 annual report, it sent many internal references/reports regarding community-based conservation to governments at multiple administrative levels since 2012. In 2016, the central government decided to establish Sanjiangyuan National Park. Many of Shanshui’s proposals derived from community-based conservation were adopted in the administrative system for the park. In 2017, Shanshui started to implement relevant measures in the park. In the same year, it lobbied to include the CCCA in the General Plan for Establishing the National Park System and eventually succeeded.¹⁰² In 2019, it participated in the formulation of Administrative Measures for Giant Panda National Park.¹⁰³ The following year, Shanshui signed formal cooperative conservation agreements with

¹⁰¹ Conservation concessions compensate ecosystem services and provide business development expertise to local communities in ways that encourage the preservation of local ecosystems.

¹⁰² According to Shanshui’s 2016 and 2017 annual reports.

¹⁰³ See Shanshui’s 2019 annual report.

Sanjiangyuan National Park and Giant Panda National Park.¹⁰⁴

In collaboration with local governments, other research institutions, local environmental organizations, and volunteers, Shanshui has consistently conducted field studies in southwestern mountainous areas and established a database of endangered species. Since 2014, Shanshui has upscaled the database to cover almost the entire country and used it to provide technical support in its policy efforts. For example, based on the database, it submitted to the CPPCC, the SFA, and the MOA proposals regarding the adjustments of the List of Key National Protected Wild Animals and the List of Key National Protected Wild Plants in 2018 and 2020. For another example, it cooperated with local environmental bureaus to develop a Biodiversity Impact Assessment Tool for EIA warning using information from the database in 2020. In 2021, it submitted proposals to the MEP and the Ministry of Natural Resources advocating for reforming the EIA system based on biodiversity data.¹⁰⁵ In its long-term practice of community-based conservation, Shanshui remains enrooted in local communities and has cultivated dozens of grassroots environmental groups. It maintains good relationships with other environmental organizations like the FON and the SEE Foundation. It joined the FON's actions to prevent the Xiaonanhai project and the Jiasa River Hydropower Plant. In 2019, Shanshui, the GEI, and six other environmental organizations formed the Citizen Biodiversity Conservation Alliance¹⁰⁶, a new organizational alliance in this field to promote community-based conservation. In 2020, the FON, Shanshui, and a few other organizations jointly submitted proposals to the NPC to revise the Wild Animal Conservation Law. Before that, based on a nationwide survey, Lü Zhi coordinated with 18 other scientists to call for forbidding eating and trading wild animals illegally, which was adopted in the revised law.¹⁰⁷ In

¹⁰⁴ See its self-introduction at <http://www.shanshui.org/about/shanshui>, accessed December 27, 2020.

¹⁰⁵ See Shanshui's 2018-2021 annual reports.

¹⁰⁶ See Shanshui's 2019 annual report.

¹⁰⁷ See Shanshui's 2020 annual report.

2022, Shanshui, the FON, and a few other organizations and companies started a project to evaluate enterprises' impacts on biodiversity.¹⁰⁸

8.2.3 Policy Influence of Angel Fund

Lü Yan, an environmental sociologist at Tsinghua University, created Angel Fund in 2006. Unlike the CLAPV and Shanshui, Angel Fund never obtained legal status either inside or outside Tsinghua University. As a result, it was a low-key organization that usually took action under the personal names of its core members. However, the organization still benefited from Lü Yan's status as an expert in a top university. As Lü Yan admitted, on the one hand, Angel Fund deliberately maintained a low profile; on the other hand, the government never oppressed it.¹⁰⁹ Angel Fund mainly influenced policies by directly contacting policymakers while it seldom exerted pressure on the government, such as mobilizing constituencies or launching signature campaigns. It neither cooperated with other environmental organizations to influence policies.¹¹⁰ Shortly after its founding, Angel Fund submitted to the CPPCC a proposal regarding mobilizing the youth to store used batteries via a sympathetic CPPCC member. It submitted the CPPCC proposals to combat heavy metal pollution in the following years. As an expert, Lü Yan was invited to attend some policy meetings and presented his proposals, such as enacting the twelfth "five-year plan" for environmental protection and the Property Law. When he had no direct access to policymakers, Lü Yan might send them letters. For example, he wrote a letter to the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games in 2006 advocating replacing wooden chopsticks with stainless steel ones. He also sent letters to the Beijing Municipal Health Bureau and the Beijing Municipal Commission of Education in 2011, proposing sharing measured values of PM 2.5 with schools and adjusting school activities accordingly. In rare cases, Angel Fund criticized government policies.

¹⁰⁸ See Shanshui's online news at <http://www.shanshui.org/information/3492/>, accessed June 19, 2023.

¹⁰⁹ The author's interview with Lü Yan on July 31, 2012, in Beijing.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

For instance, in the wake of the Fukushima nuclear accident in 2011, Lü Yan opposed the construction of a nuclear power plant in Chongqing through a media outlet, and he also organized some Tsinghua experts to discuss the issue. In contrast to the Ocean Protection Commune, which employed a more radical approach, experts' mild and professional opposition to nuclear power did not invite state repression. In general, some of Angel Fund's actions impacted policy outcomes, while others were unfruitful.¹¹¹ Suffering from its flawed legal status, Angel Fund reduced its activities and has become dormant in recent years.

8.2.4 Policy Influence of the CWA

Like the IPE, Clean Water Alliances (CWA) is another organization dealing with water pollution, but it adopts the mode of embedded pluralism to influence policies. Gao Zhong, founder and chairman of the CWA, is a water expert with broad domestic and international professional connections. As an alumnus of the famous Beijing No. 4 High School, Gao has built a personal network with China's political elites.¹¹² As an environmental advisor of the Daxing District Government in Beijing, Gao Zhong advised on wastewater treatment. He also made the CWA register with the Daxing District Bureau of Civil Affairs in 2007. Before its registration, the CWA had already researched the national water administration system for the Ministry of Science and Technology. He sent the research report to nine relevant ministries and the State Council via an internal publication. Eventually, two of the six proposals in the report were adopted. Through the internal publication, the CWA also brought forward the issues of wastewater treatment and water pollution caused by golf courses, but these efforts did not impact relevant policies. Gao Zhong served as an advisor for the Ministry of Water Resources and the CCYL. Sometimes, they invited

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² The author's interviews with Gao Zhong and Jiao Zhimin, then deputy director-general of the CWA, on August 10, 2012, in Beijing. The information on the CWA in this research was basically obtained from these interviews.

him to attend policy meetings. He is also familiar with some NPC representatives and CPPCC members and occasionally facilitated them to submit proposals regarding improving water quality. During the 2005 NPC and CPPCC sessions, Gao Zhong mobilized more than 300 NPC representatives and CPPCC members to sign his Clean Water Declaration to promote awareness of water protection. According to Jiao Zhimin, then deputy director-general of the CWA, the organization mainly relies on contacting the government directly to influence policies and tries to avoid pressing the government on politically sensitive issues. It also seldom cooperates with other environmental organizations. Gao Zhong confirmed this non-confrontational and cooperative attitude toward the government and admitted he inevitably used many personal connections in organizational activities, including influencing policies. The CWA refused to cooperate with the IPE to develop water pollution maps, although Ma Jun contacted Gao Zhong to discuss the possibility. Gao also mentioned that he discovered high-fluoride drinking water in Baotou City, Inner Mongolia. He decided to persuade local officials face to face to process the polluted water instead of publicizing the problem via media outlets. In 2017, the CWA established a Department of Legal Affairs to provide legal aid to water pollution victims and even file EPILs.¹¹³ However, this department has remained inactive to date. The CWA also remained inactive during the Covid-19 pandemic. In April 2023, it was revived by celebrating its 18th anniversary.¹¹⁴

8.2.5 Policy Influence of the EFRC

Founded by Li Li in 2006 and registered with Chaoyang District Bureau of Civil Affairs in 2010, Environment Friends Research Center for Science and Technology (EFRC) is another organization paying attention to some technological aspects of environmental protection. The EFRC is the leading organization monitoring the implementation of the policy of restricting plastic

¹¹³ See online news at http://news.china.com.cn/2017-03/22/content_40489059.htm, accessed December 28, 2020.

¹¹⁴ See online news at <https://tech.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202304/07/WS642fd4cca3102ada8b237408.html>, accessed June 19, 2023.

shopping bags and advocating for limiting excessive packaging. At the end of 2007, the General Office of the State Council promulgated the Notice on Restricting the Production, Sale, and Use of Plastic Shopping Bags, which bans plastic shopping bags thinner than 0.025 millimeters and offering any free plastic shopping bags. Before the policy came into force in June 2008, the EFRC formed a “plastic ban policy study group” (Mao 2014, 173). The group soon responded to the MOC’s public opinion solicitation for enacting an administrative measure regulating the paid utilization of plastic bags. However, the MOC had no response, and its proposals were not adopted in the departmental rule.¹¹⁵ Right after the State Council’s policy was implemented, the EFRC conducted a field investigation in Beijing. In May 2009, the group sent an open letter to Li Jing, a senior official in the NDRC who was partly responsible for enforcing the policy, to report the investigation findings. In the same month, the EFRC, the GVB, and an online media outlet jointly held a forum to discuss the implementation of the policy. They invited Li Jing and an official from the MOC to attend the forum. The EFRC communicated with Li Jing face to face and submitted its proposals regarding enforcing the policy to her. From then on, the EFRC established a good relationship with Li Jing.¹¹⁶ From 2009 to 2011, the group conducted field investigations annually in multiple cities cooperating with local environmental groups and sent Li Jing three more letters to report results and policy proposals. In 2010, Li Jing herself led a team to inspect the implementation of the policy in multiple cities, including some cities in which the EFRC conducted investigations. After that, the NDRC and three other ministries issued a policy document demanding self-examination of observing the policy. In 2011, the EFRC submitted a proposal for stricter policy enforcement to the CPPCC through Wang Ming, a professor at Tsinghua University

¹¹⁵ The author’s face-to-face interview with Li Li, founder and director of the EFRC, on August 17, 2012, in Beijing and the author’s email interview with Mao Da, one board member of the EFRC, in August 2012.

¹¹⁶ The author’s interview with Li Li on August 17, 2012, in Beijing.

and a CPPCC member. In 2015 and 2016, an enlarged “plastic ban policy study group” conducted another two rounds of field investigations.

In 2010, the EFRC conducted another field investigation of moon cake’s excessive packaging in Beijing. According to the results of the investigation, the EFRC submitted a separate proposal to the CPPCC through Wang Ming in 2011, calling for the enactment of the Regulations on Restricting Excessive Packaging, of which former General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine had promulgated a draft in 2008. However, the policy still hangs in the air as of 2023, although the issue was already mentioned in the Cleaner Production Promotion Law revised in 2012. Mao Da, a board member of the EFRC who founded Shenzhen Zero Waste in 2017, attributed this retarded legislation to the resistance of industries.¹¹⁷ In 2021, the State Administration for Market Regulation promulgated a revised compulsory national standard titled Requirements of Restricting Excessive Packaging for Commodities—Food and Cosmetics, enacted in 2009. However, its coverage and effectiveness are not comparable to those of the expected regulation because it is not a legal basis that relevant agencies can fall back on when giving out penalties for excessive packaging (Mao 2014, 175).

The EFRC is one of the initiators of the CZWA, which it sometimes uses to launch policy activities. For example, in 2012, it mobilized some organizations of the CZWA to conduct investigations of moon cakes’ excessive packaging in multiple locations (Mao 2014, 172-173). Within the CZWA, it also facilitated some policy activities of the FON regarding municipal solid waste. The EFRC has participated in a few organizational alliances, including the GCA, the CRWA, and the China Civil Climate Action Network, although it does not serve as the leading organization in any of them. The EFRC is called the “home of grassroots NGOs” because it regularly

¹¹⁷ The author’s email interview with Mao Da in August 2012.

accommodates dozens of grassroots environmental groups across the country. It maintains close relationships with some of them and encourages their interactions with local governments. The EFRC appears as a mild organization in the eyes of both governments and fellow environmental organizations. Li Li admitted that the EFRC had cultivated many personal connections with government officials even if they did not know each other first.¹¹⁸ Its relationship with Li Jing is a good example. The EFRC has established good relationships with the MEP and its branches in Beijing and Chaoyang District, the NDRC, the MOHRSS, and the Chaoyang District Bureau of Civil Affairs. It even helped the FON complete its registration and pass annual inspections. The EFRC intentionally avoids radical approaches to influence policies and politically sensitive issues. For instance, the organization avoided the Xiaonanhai battle, as the FON and the EFRC itself intended to sustain its neutral stance. As Li Li concluded, “in exchange for better results, we bear the overall situation in mind and do not condemn the government despite occasional feelings of grievance.”¹¹⁹

In 2016, the EFRC joined the FON to sue a zinc production plant in Yunnan Province. In 2018, it independently sued the Anhui Provincial Government for compensating damages caused by a flood, but the Suqian Intermediate Court rejected the case. Since 2019, the EFRC has filed one to two EPILs every year. However, these lawsuits only involved enterprises or individuals instead of government sectors. In addition, the EFRC did not employ other aggressive approaches to influence policies. Therefore, filing these EPILs has not basically changed its mode of policy influence.

8.2.6 Policy Influence of the GVB

As one of China’s oldest and most famous environmental organizations, the GVB adopts

¹¹⁸ The author’s interview with Li Li on August 17, 2012, in Beijing.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

embedded pluralism instead of critical pluralism, in contrast to the FON and the GEV. It cooperates with governments and avoids conflicts with the official system (Hatch 2014, 52-53). Like other environmental organizations falling into this category, the GVB seldom employs radical approaches to influence policies.¹²⁰ Its founder and director, Liao Xiaoyi, is recognized as an environmental pioneer by both the Party-state and fellow environmentalists and won a few domestic and international awards. As a result, the GVB has cultivated good relationships with various agencies at all administrative levels. In 1997, the GVB and local government experimented on sorting household waste in Beijing's Xicheng District. Two years later, it created the first green community in the country in cooperation with Beijing's Xuanwu District (Chen 2009, 45). Subsequently, Liao Xiaoyi was invited to serve as the environmental advisor of the Beijing Olympic Games Bidding Committee and the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games. Liao proposed to include constructing green communities and sorting household waste into the Action Plan for Green Olympic Games and submitted detailed implementation plans, which the Beijing Municipal Government eventually adopted. In addition, she successfully persuaded the organizing committee to use only green building materials in Olympic projects and pushed the SFA to establish China's first forest certification system in 2007.

From 2003, the GVB held Renewable Energy Reporters' Forums multiple times yearly and issued annual awards to outstanding reporters. These forums impacted policy changes, such as adopting the Renewable Energy Law in 2005 (Tan 2007) and monitoring PM 2.5 since 2012 through face-to-face discussions with officials and intensive media coverage. Based on the influence of these forums, the GVB obtained opportunities to attend relevant policy meetings held by policymakers.

¹²⁰ The author's interviews with Jiang Chao, then manager of the Safety of Chemicals and Environmental Health project, and Zhang Hong, one board member and project advisor of the GVB, on July 29, 2012, in Beijing.

In 2003, the GVB started the Safety of Chemicals and Environmental Health project. It conducted a few field investigations of heavy metal pollution, especially mercury and lead pollution, and delivered the information to the MEP and MOH officials. The project also promoted mercury-free health care throughout the country.¹²¹ In 2013, the GVB held a symposium on mercury pollution management, which contributed to the enactment of the Technological Policy of Mercury Pollution Prevention and Control, promulgated by the MEP in 2015.

The GVB was one of the major initiators of the 26°C (78.8°F) Air Conditioning Energy-saving Campaign launched in 2004 (Chen 2009, 45). After a series of activities and extensive media coverage in the following years, the campaign received support from high-level officials, including Wen Jiabao and Wang Qishan (Haddad 2021, 122-125). In 2007, the General Office of the State Council issued the Notice on Strict Enforcement of Standards for Air-conditioning Temperature Control in Public Buildings. The next year, the MOHURD promulgated Measures for the Management of Indoor Temperature Control in Public Buildings. Both policy documents require indoor temperatures in public buildings to be controlled at no lower than 26°C in summer and no higher than 20°C (68°F) in winter (Huo 2014, 46-47; Jiang 2014, 223). Media outlets attending Renewable Energy Reporters' Forums played a key role in boosting the campaign.

Since 2008, the GVB has entered a new realm of poverty alleviation and social work, and these projects have gradually dominated its working agenda and shaped the organization's new trajectory. This change stemmed from Liao Xiaoyi's understanding of the relationship between ecological civilization and Chinese traditional culture.¹²² Taking the opportunity to participate in the reconstruction after the Wenchuan earthquake, the GVB experimented with constructing a new mode of ecological village called Lehe Jiayuan (happy and harmonious homeland) in Sichuan

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid.

Province. In 2009, the GVB started experiments with building Lehe Shequ (happy and harmonious communities) in an urban area of Beijing and created a system of indices for evaluation. In 2012, the GVB established Lehe Zhijia (happy and harmonious homes) to serve left-behind children in poverty-stricken areas. Attracting the interest of many local governments and some official organizations, this new mode of rural and urban community construction has been extended to multiple locations in China and incurred some local policy changes.¹²³ Although sustainable development is the tenet of the mode and environmental protection is still an inherent part of it, the comprehensive design of these projects has made the GVB's major undertaking go beyond that of an ordinary environmental organization. Consequently, the GVB's efforts in the original field of environmental protection and relevant policy activities have significantly decreased in recent years. The GVB's interest in major environmental policies, such as the Environmental Protection Law and "five-year plans" for environmental protection, dramatically declined. It neither submitted proposals to the NPC or the CPPCC nor participated in governments' policy meetings in recent years.¹²⁴ In 2009, the GVB evaluated the implementation of those policies regarding controlling indoor temperatures in public buildings and restricting plastic shopping bags. However, it has never conducted such evaluations after that. Its brand activities, Renewable Energy Reporters' Forums and relevant awards to outstanding reporters, have been suspended since July 2015 and December 2014, respectively.¹²⁵ The Safety of Chemicals and Environmental Health project has had no updated activities since July 2014. As mentioned before, 12 environmental organizations started the Chemical Safety Network in 2019. The GVB did not join the network despite being the first environmental organization to tackle the issue of chemical safety in China. The GVB used to

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ They resumed only once in 2020.

initiate or participate in some joint policy activities coordinating with fellow environmental organizations. It was even involved in the Nu River anti-dam activism. In recent years, however, the organization has alienated itself from such joint activities and rejected many requests for its signature.¹²⁶ Wang Yongchen also mentioned that the GVB obviously reduced its participation in signature campaigns launched by the GEV.¹²⁷ Focusing on its Lehe brand projects, the GVB's primary organizational goal has switched to providing services. Influencing local policies is now only a byproduct of its daily activities. Because the implementation of these projects relies on the cooperation of local governments, the policy influence mode of the GVB is still embedded pluralism. However, its policy influence is on a reduced scale. Although the GVB generally adopts embedded pluralism, it has already shown characteristics of reduced embedded pluralism in recent years. In 2017, Liao Xiaoyi established the Beijing Lehe Social Work Service Center and Beijing Lehe Foundation to strengthen social work services. They coexist with the GVB to manage Lehe brand projects. In March 2023, they celebrated the GVB's 27th anniversary.¹²⁸

8.2.7 Policy Influence of the BGC

The GVB is not the sole environmental organization interested in building ecological villages. Beijing Green Cross (BGC)¹²⁹ has devoted itself to constructing green villages in rural China since its founding in 2003. Its founder and director, Sun Jun, was a painter and environmental volunteer. After experimenting with constructing an ecological village in the Yanqing District of Beijing, he registered the BGC with the Yanqing District Bureau of Civil Affairs and sought to create a typical model in China. In 2003, Sun Jun and more than a dozen environmental specialists he invited from Beijing and Tianjin persuaded government officials of

¹²⁶ The author's interviews with Jiang Chao and Zhang Hong.

¹²⁷ The author's interview with Wang Yongchen on July 28, 2012, in Beijing.

¹²⁸ See online news at <https://www.rujiagz.com/article/25209>, accessed June 21, 2023.

¹²⁹ The information about this organization is mainly based on its self-introduction and annual reports, collected in the author's fieldwork and on its website at <http://www.bjlsz.org.cn> and Nongdaolianzhong's website at <http://www.nongdaolianzhong.com>.

Xiangfan City in Hubei Province, renamed Xiangyang City in 2010, to build ecological villages in Wushan Town. In the following several years, the BGC successfully created a comprehensive model for developing ecological villages named the Wushan Model, which accentuates villagers' participation and covers green living, green production, green culture, and village governance (Xie, 2016). Because this new model significantly raised villagers' incomes and completely reshaped selected villages, it attracted the attention of high-level officials. In 2006, Yu Zhengsheng, then Party Secretary of Hubei Province and a Politburo member, decided to extend the Wushan Model to the whole province. In the following year, Li Changchun, then a member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo, further confirmed the value of the Wushan Model. In 2007 and 2008, the Wushan Model was successfully copied in both Wangtai Village and Xiongying Village, respectively, in Xiangfan City. Since the Wushan project was completed in 2008, the Wushan Model has been proven to be self-sustaining because villagers actively participated in the process (Xie, 2016). Thanks to the endorsement of high-level officials and intensive media reports, the Wushan Model became a well-known model nationwide. Many local governments invited the BGC to advise on rural construction. As of 2023, the BGC facilitated the building of ecological villages in Hubei Province and 15 other provinces, including Shandong, Henan, Hebei, Anhui, Guizhou, and Hunan. It also participated in the reconstruction of Sichuan Province after the Wenchuan earthquake. Many of these villages have become star villages at local or national levels. For example, Haotang Village in Henan Province won awards from the MOHURD twice. Considering different local conditions, the BGC enriched and adjusted the Wushan Model in its practice. In the meantime, it developed a theoretical system including the "BGC 9000 ecological standard" and a software system.

In addition to local environmental policies, the BGC influences local agricultural and

poverty alleviation policies, including various developmental plans. Since 2014, Sun Jun has been invited to advise on national-level projects of rural construction and poverty alleviation, and he holds concurrent posts in multiple official institutions. For example, he was invited to be vice president of the Urban and Rural Planning Committee under the China Urbanization Promotion Council, initiated by multiple agencies and official institutions in 2014. In 2018, this committee and the BGC jointly started Nongdaolianzhong as an overarching platform to coordinate specific projects across the country. The BGC has built channels into the official system through long-term cooperation with local and central governments. In general, it falls into the category of embedded pluralism. Compared with the GVB, the BGC attaches more importance to policy effects in constructing green villages and acts more actively to spread the models they have created.

8.2.8 Policy Influence of the GEI

Jin Jiaman founded the Global Environmental Institute (GEI) in 2004. Before creating the GEI, Jin was a mid-level official of the Chinese Research Academy of Environmental Sciences, an institution directly affiliated with the MEP (Hatch 2014, 54; Hsu C. 2017, 122; Teets 2018, 133). Thanks to this background, the GEI has maintained a close connection with the MEP since its founding, which may extend to relationships with other agencies. For example, since Xie Zhenhua, former minister of the MEP, assumed the office of vice minister of the NDRC in charge of climate change in 2006, the GEI extended its cooperation with Xie to the NDRC (Teets 2018, 134).¹³⁰ The GEI further strengthened its relationship with the Committee of Population, Resources, and Environment in the CPPCC after Xie became one deputy director of the committee in 2015. In addition to receiving invitations to attend various policy meetings, the GEI takes advantage of other opportunities generated from these relationships. For example, the GEI often cooperates with

¹³⁰ The author's interview with Jin Jiaman on August 9, 2012, in Beijing.

official institutions or experts within these institutions to resolve technical issues in its projects, including the Chinese Research Academy of Environmental Sciences and the Chinese Academy for Environmental Planning under the MEP, the Energy Research Institute and the Chinese Academy of Macroeconomic Research under the NDRC, and several institutes in the CAS.¹³¹ In 2010 and 2012, the GEI codeveloped textbooks of sustainable development with Central Party School and Chinese Academy of Governance¹³², respectively (Hatch 2014, 54; Teets 2014, 168; Teets 2018, 134). In the field of environment, the GEI is known for its capacity to draw stable financial resources and conduct complicated projects. Zhang Jiqiang, a former colleague of Jin Jiaman in the MEP and later a vice project director of U.S.-based Blue Moon Fund, serves as the key figure to help the GEI acquire stable financial resources (Hatch 2014, 54; Hsu C. 2017, 124). In recent years, the GEI invited Zhang to chair its Guiding Committee. Although the GEI benefits much from its relationship with the official system, it is still widely recognized as a bottom-up organization because it receives little funding from the government and maintains independence in terms of personnel and management (Hsu C. 2017, 124).

The GEI is a typical organization in the category of embedded pluralism. It never confronted the government or applied relatively radical approaches to influence policies, such as issuing open letters, filing lawsuits, or mobilizing constituencies, not to mention street activities. As a co-founder of the GEV (Hsu 2017, 123), Jin Jiaman was involved in the Nu River anti-dam activism to a limited extent. She even jointly sued the MEP in 2006.¹³³ However, as both Wang Yongchen and Jin Jiaman herself admitted, this was the only legal action against the government Jin Jiaman ever took.¹³⁴ Although the GEI supported a few signature campaigns launched by other

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² The Central Party School incorporated this academy in 2018.

¹³³ See this chapter's GEV and the Nu River Anti-Dam Activism case study.

¹³⁴ The author's interviews with Wang Yongchen on July 28, 2012, and Jin Jiaman on August 9, 2012, in Beijing.

environmental organizations, it neither substantially participated in these joint efforts nor turned to other environmental organizations for help in its own lobbying activities.¹³⁵ Instead, the GEI mainly relies on its connections with the official system and face-to-face persuasion to achieve its policy goals. As Teets (2018, 135) notes, the GEI built long-term cooperative relationships around shared policy goals with government officials by embedding them in a policy network to influence policy. Jin Jiaman herself explained the GEI's strategy as follows¹³⁶:

“The Chinese government is powerful. To reach an agreement with the government, we must persistently communicate with it using languages and manners it can accept. We must cooperate with the government by helping it realize problems and solve problems.”

She also mentioned that by using this strategy, the GEI could build good relationships with government agencies with which it was initially unacquainted. For example, the GEI had no connection with the SFA when it conducted forestry-related projects in its early years. Because the U.S.-based Nature Conservancy had collaborations with both the GEI and the SFA, the GEI started communications with the SFA through the Nature Conservancy. After persistently but constructively presenting relevant issues to the SFA, they achieved consensus and established a good relationship. For another example, when the GEI brought the environmental problems caused by China's overseas investments to the MOC, the agency simply denied the issue. Since the GEI conducted some overseas projects and delivered solutions to the MOC, it gradually accepted the GEI's viewpoints.¹³⁷

The GEI actively represents the interests of its constituencies. It has conducted numerous projects in communities to popularize low-carbon technologies. As will be introduced in the

¹³⁵ The author's interview with Jin Jiaman on August 9, 2012, in Beijing.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

following subsections, accentuating the balance of ecological protection and community development, its community-based conservation projects have promoted residents' welfare and community participation in environmental protection and relevant local affairs. Through field investigations, the GEI often collects and articulates the opinions of its constituencies and tries to influence policies based on these opinions. Conducting projects abroad and paying attention to the environmental impacts of China's overseas investments, the GEI even represents the interests of international constituencies.

Specifically, the GEI has made policy achievements in three domains—ecological conservation and community development, international investment, trade, and the environment, and U.S.-China climate cooperation.

8.2.8.1 Ecological Conservation and Community Development

In 2005, as a partner of U.S.-based Conservation International, the GEI started the implementation of the Community Conservation Concession Agreement (CCCA) at Fengtongzhai Nature Reserve in Sichuan Province (Teets 2014, 166). Since 2011, it has introduced the CCCA into Ningxia and Inner Mongolia to protect grasslands. Cooperating with multiple agencies in Qinghai Province, the GEI has also copied the mechanism of the CCCA in Sanjiangyuan since 2013.¹³⁸ In 2014, Yan Juanqi, a former vice chairman of the NPC standing committee, endorsed the GEI's practice of the CCCA after visiting Fengtongzhai. Based on its successful practice, the GEI lobbied the government to incorporate the CCCA into national policies. In 2010, the MEP included the CCCA in the China National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan for 2011-2030 (Xia 2023, 18). In 2011, the SFA designated the GEI to draft Management Measures for Forest Protection in the Project of Natural Forest Resources Protection (revised version) and

¹³⁸ According to the author's interview with Jin Jiaman, the GEI and Shanshui conduct similar but separate CCCA projects with their own characteristics in the region of Sanjiangyuan.

Agreement on Forest Protection Responsibility. In 2012, the SFA accepted and promulgated these two policy documents, which would extend the CCCA to the entire country in the natural forest protection project (Teets 2018, 133). In the following years, the GEI facilitated the SFA to implement the CCCA in protecting natural forests in 24 counties. Based on this practice and its own research, the GEI provided supporting materials to the NDRC to draft the Regulations on Ecological Compensation. As early as 2006, the GEI lobbied the NPC's Environment Protection and Resources Conservation Committee to include the CCCA in the proposed Nature Reserve Law. The committee changed the law to the Natural Heritage Protection Law later and allowed the GEI to participate in the process.¹³⁹ Because of objections of many experts regarding the coverage and operation/supervision mechanisms of protection (Xie, 2014), the committee changed the law again to the Law on Nature Conservation Areas. The GEI continues to attend symposiums regarding the enactment of the law.¹⁴⁰

In recent years, the GEI has scaled up its research and field investigations and held multiple symposiums to develop more comprehensive policy proposals for protecting biodiversity and natural resources. In 2013, it put forward a notion and plan for developing an Ecological Service Economy, which balances ecological protection and community development based on the application of the CCCA. The GEI formulated a complete proposal, and Yan Juanqi submitted it to the Central Committee of the CCP. As of 2022, the GEI had extended its practice of Ecological Service Economy to nine provinces in China.¹⁴¹ Accentuating herders' participation in grassland protection, the GEI proposed a new mode of applying subsidies and incentive funds for grassland ecological protection and recommended it to the MOA in 2015. Since 2015, the GEI conducted

¹³⁹ The author's interview with Jin Jiaman on August 9, 2012, in Beijing.

¹⁴⁰ GEI news at <http://www.geichina.org>, accessed June 25, 2023.

¹⁴¹ See the GEI's 2022 annual report, available at http://www.geichina.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/GEI-2022-Annual-Report_Bilingual.pdf, accessed June 25, 2023.

research on national parks in both China and the U.S. and sent a draft of the National Park Law to the NPC's Environment Protection and Resources Conservation Committee. It also submitted a proposal to the NDRC pushing for establishing a national park system in general and Sanjiangyuan National Park in particular, including introducing the CCCA. As introduced before, this proposal was realized in 2016. The GEI introduced the CCCA into Sanjiangyuan, Qilianshan, and Qianjiangyuan National Parks in the following years. In 2018, the GEI launched a new program of marine conservation. It started the China Sea Turtle Conservation Alliance and submitted policy proposals to the Bureau of Fisheries under the MOA when the agency enacted the Action Plan for Sea Turtle Conservation (2019-2023). Invited by the local government, the GEI introduced the CCCA into Dandong City, Liaoning Province, in 2019 to protect a coastal wetland. Based on this new practice, the GEI started to provide proposals for establishing marine national parks to relevant agencies.¹⁴²

8.2.8.2 International Investment, Trade, and the Environment

Shortly after the GEI's founding, Jin Jiaman was aware of the problem that some Chinese enterprises committed excessive deforestation overseas at an international conference held in Moscow. After returning to China, Jin Jiaman tried to persuade officials of the SFA to admit the problem and figure out a solution.¹⁴³ After two years of joint investigations and research, the GEI, the SFA, and the CAS drafted the Guide on Sustainable Overseas Silviculture by Chinese Enterprises, promulgated by the SFA and the MOC in 2007 (Xia 2023, 11). Two years later, these two agencies further promulgated the Guide on Sustainable Overseas Forest Management and Utilization by Chinese Enterprises (Plantan 2018, 208). Although these two documents are not

¹⁴² The GEI's introduction of the marine conservation program, available at <http://www.geichina.org/program/marine-conservation>, accessed January 4, 2021.

¹⁴³ The author's interview with Jin Jiaman on August 9, 2012, in Beijing.

mandatory rules, they set a precedent for regulating overseas activities of Chinese enterprises in forest management, utilization, and protection, which has since become a part of the SFA's routine work. In 2016, the SFA initiated the China Responsible Forest Product Trade and Investment Alliance, comprising dozens of enterprises, research institutions, social organizations, and media outlets.

Since 2007, more environmental damages related to overseas investments of Chinese enterprises emerged. As a response, the GEI launched more comprehensive research with the Chinese Academy for Environmental Planning and the University of International Business and Economics. It lobbied the MEP to issue a comprehensive guide to regulate overseas Chinese enterprises' environmental behaviors. Before long, the MEP accepted the project and joined the endeavor. However, the MOC became a hindrance because it worried stricter environmental requirements might negatively impact the state's "going out" strategy.¹⁴⁴ As previously introduced, the GEI patiently tried to persuade the ministry for a few years, citing its research and practice. In addition, the GEI submitted a relevant proposal to the CPPCC through personal connections in 2012.¹⁴⁵ Eventually, the MOC compromised. In 2013, the MOC and the MEP jointly publicized the Guidelines for Environmental Protection in Foreign Investment and Cooperation, which incorporates core proposals of the GEI (Plantan 2018, 208). In 2019, the GEI evaluated the implementation effects of the guidelines and drafted a revised version.¹⁴⁶ In 2021, the MOC and the MEP jointly promulgated the Green Development Guidelines for Foreign Investment and Cooperation, which again incorporates many of the GEI's proposals. In 2017, the GEI submitted proposals to the NDRC as a response to its soliciting public opinions on Measures for the

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ See the GEI's 2019 annual report, available at http://www.geichina.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2019-Annual-Report_CN.pdf, accessed January 4, 2021.

Administration of Overseas Investment of Enterprises. The final version promulgated in 2018 includes an article mentioning environmental protection.

The GEI has also strengthened its research and field investigations of China's overseas investments in recent years and tried to influence policies accordingly. Multiple reports of the GEI emphasize the negative environmental impacts of Chinese investments in coal/energy industries. Consistent with this proposal, Xi Jinping announced that China would stop building new overseas coal-fired power plants in 2021. The GEI also communicated with the Export-Import Bank of China, China Development Bank, and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, urging them to steer China's overseas investments into low-carbon industries and improve management of environmental and social risks. In addition, the GEI researched the China Climate Change South-South Cooperation Fund and presented its proposals to Xie Zhenhua. In 2018, it conducted a research project designated by the MEP to evaluate the effects of this fund on foreign aid (Xia 2023, 10). Since 2017, the GEI has launched a project to conduct research on and combat the illegal trade of ivory and other wild animal products, which facilitated the implementation and evaluation of Chinese policy banning ivory trade promulgated in December 2016 (Gamso, 2019; Li and Shapiro 2020, 170-171; Song and Yao 2022, 164). Since 2018, the GEI has researched China's import of some agricultural products, and it submitted policy proposals to the MEP and the MOC to reduce negative environmental impacts on exporters, especially Brazil.

The GEI is not only an observer of the "going out" strategy but a forerunner of the strategy in China's social organizations. It has conducted many projects abroad and promoted communication and cooperation between the Chinese government and governments in host countries. At first, the GEI relied on personal connections or intermediates to acquire overseas projects. For instance, one of the GEI's project managers happened to know the former president

of Sri Lanka. Hence, the president introduced the GEI into his country to conduct a biogas project. For another instance, Sinohydro Corporation brought the GEI to Laos to conduct a biogas project in the reservoir area of a dam the corporation was constructing. The GEI obtained the opportunity because it was conducting environmental capacity building for the corporation at that time and won its trust.¹⁴⁷ It turned out to be a self-reinforcing way over time. As the GEI's records of performance and reputation in those projects built up, it won more and more overseas projects and the trust of government officials in both China and the host countries of the projects. Through these projects, the GEI may influence the policies of these countries to some extent. In Laos, the GEI signed a memorandum of understanding with the Laotian government in 2008 to facilitate sustainable management of land and other natural resources. In Sri Lanka, the GEI assisted the government in developing more advanced renewable energy technologies and low-carbon policies by constructing an exemplary low-carbon town. In Myanmar, the GEI successfully introduced the CCCA into many villages and conducted large-scale projects of renewable energies endorsed by the NDRC (Xia 2023, 11). In 2015, the GEI mediated the meeting between Xie Zhenhua and Dr. Thet Thet Zin, former deputy minister of Myanmar's Ministry of Environment Conservation and Forestry. The meeting set the foundation for Myanmar-China cooperation on climate change. To combat illegal timber and wild animal trade and strengthen forestry cooperation, the GEI has catalyzed multiple unofficial meetings between forestry administrations and customs of Myanmar and China since 2014. Consequently, the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding for forestry cooperation in 2017 (Xia 2023, 11).¹⁴⁸ Supported by the U.K.-based International Institute for Environment and Development and the Chinese Academy of Forestry, the GEI has conducted the China-Africa Collaboration for Improving Forest Resource Governance Project

¹⁴⁷ The author's interview with Jin Jiaman on August 9, 2012, in Beijing.

¹⁴⁸ See the GEI's 2017 annual report, available at <http://www.geichina.org/annual-report-2017>, accessed October 11, 2019.

since 2013 in four African countries—Cameroon, Congo-Kinshasa, Uganda, and Mozambique. In 2019, the GEI extended the project to Congo-Brazzaville, Ghana, Liberia, and Gabon. It established the annual China-Africa Forest Governance Learning Platform, on which stakeholders from China and relevant African and European countries, including government officials from forestry administrations, communicate with each other on forest management and sustainable forestry development. In 2020, the GEI established the Africa-China CSOs Biodiversity Dialogue Platform to promote cooperation in combating illegal wild animal trade and protecting biodiversity. In 2021, it initiated the East and Southeast Asia Community Conservation Network, which has conducted biodiversity protection projects in multiple countries and introduced the CCCA into these projects. In 2022, the GEI signed memorandums of understanding with two local governments in Brazil to promote sustainable development.¹⁴⁹

Since 2009, the GEI has regularly attended international conferences, such as the UN Climate Change Conferences, the Meetings of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and Summits of Civil Society Delegates from the G20 Countries (C20 summits). At these conferences, it actively participated in discussions on addressing climate change, promoting sustainable development, and advancing green finance and investment. In 2016, the GEI initiated the Working Group for Green Finance and Investment with ten other domestic and international NGOs. The group was deeply involved in the 2016 C20 summit, and its recommendations for developing green finance and investment were incorporated into the C20 Communique and submitted to the 2016 G20 Hangzhou summit. At the Global Climate Action Summit held in California in 2018, the GEI and nine other domestic environmental organizations and institutions started an alliance named the Global Climate Action

¹⁴⁹ See the GEI's 2022 annual report.

Initiative. They welcomed the participation of all domestic and international stakeholders. In August 2019, the Global Climate Action Initiative, the Thailand Department of Natural Resources and Environment, and the ASEAN-China Centre held a conference in Bangkok to discuss the cooperation in energy transformation between China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).¹⁵⁰

8.2.8.3 U.S.-China Climate Cooperation

One remarkable achievement of the GEI on the international stage is facilitating Track II dialogues for climate change between the U.S. and China and pushing forward U.S.-China climate cooperation, which serves as a good case for embedded pluralism in environmental organizations.

The Global Environmental Institute and U.S.-China Climate Cooperation

Before 2008, U.S.-China climate negotiations had stalled because of disagreements and mutual distrust. The GEI intended to break the deadlock by creating opportunities for Track II dialogues, non-governmental, informal, and unofficial dialogues between non-state actors. At that time, the GEI happened to conduct an energy efficiency project funded by the U.S.-based Rockefeller Foundation and Blue Moon Fund. Some American experts involved in the project had personal connections in Washington and would like to broker an informal conversation between China and the United States. Jin Jiaman presented this idea to Xie Zhenhua and received his endorsement. The Rockefeller Foundation and Blue Moon Fund not only funded the dialogues but found the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace to be the GEI's American counterpart.¹⁵¹ In July and October 2008, they held the first two rounds of dialogues. In addition to Chinese and American NGOs and experts on energy and climate, senior policy advisors of presidential

¹⁵⁰ See the GEI's 2019 annual report.

¹⁵¹ The author's interview with Jin Jiaman on August 9, 2012, in Beijing.

nominees of both the Democratic Party and the Republican Party, and some government officials from both countries attended the dialogues as guests. The dialogues went smoothly and reactivated contacts between these two countries thereof.

After President Obama took office in January 2009, the U.S. started to pursue a proactive agenda to scale up the cooperation with China on clean energy and climate change. In March 2009, Xie Zhenhua visited the U.S. and interviewed a few senior officials from the Obama administration and Congress. As a part of Track II dialogues, the GEI and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace organized a meeting, at which Xie also met representatives from American NGOs, research institutions, and the media. In light of deepened cooperation, the GEI and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace agreed to push for a memorandum of understanding. These two organizations collaborated in drafting the memorandum, which was further revised by the Obama administration and the Chinese NDRC.¹⁵² In July 2009, Dai Bingguo, then Chinese State Councilor in charge of foreign affairs, and Hillary Clinton, then Secretary of State of the U.S., signed the Memorandum of Understanding to Enhance Cooperation on Climate Change, Energy, and the Environment at the first round of U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue held in Washington D.C. (Wu and Xu 2013, 80-81). Although the memorandum failed to specify the roadmap and timetable of U.S.-China climate cooperation, it started a new phase of cooperation rather than mutual accusations between the world's two largest emitters of carbon dioxide. U.S.-China climate cooperation was a key impetus behind the agreements achieved at the UN Climate Change Conferences held in Copenhagen, Cancun, and Durban (Lewis 2020, 53).

In 2012, the Center for American Progress replaced the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace to act as the GEI's American partner in Track II dialogues. In addition to

¹⁵² Ibid.

holding these dialogues, they studied energy and climate policies in these two countries and provided information, policy analyses, and recommendations to participants of the dialogues. By the end of 2015, the GEI and its partners had organized eight Track II dialogues that set the foundation for the Track I dialogues between the Chinese and U.S. governments. In 2013, the two governments established the U.S.-China Climate Change Working Group, coordinating relevant agencies in both countries for frequent negotiations. President Obama and President Xi Jinping announced three joint statements on climate change from 2014 to 2016. U.S.-China joint endeavor was the decisive factor in achieving the Paris Agreement at the 2015 UN Climate Change Conference held in Paris (Lewis 2020, 53).

Realizing significant climate policy achievements in the U.S. are at the state level, the GEI also emphasized the cooperation between U.S. states and Chinese provinces. In the 2009 memorandum, it insisted on including such an article and received support from both countries.¹⁵³ Some policy advisors of U.S. state governors were also invited to attend Track II dialogues. Since 2009, the GEI has found a long-term U.S. partner to conduct relevant projects—the Center for Climate Strategies (CCS), whose energy and climate action plans have been successfully applied in more than 30 U.S. states to realize reducing greenhouse gas emissions and developing local economies concurrently. From 2011 to 2016, they further joined the U.S.-China EcoPartnership Program sponsored by the U.S. Department of State and the Chinese NDRC. In 2010, the GEI and the CCS arranged for some Chinese climate officials at the provincial level and relevant technological and policy experts to visit the U.S. In 2013, these two organizations and the U.S. Consulate General in Guangzhou mediated the Guangdong Province and California governments to sign a memorandum of understanding regarding the cooperation on low-carbon development.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

More importantly, the GEI and the CCS have made every effort to introduce the CCS' quantitative methods into China. Cooperating with a few Chinese research institutions, such as the Institute of Science and Development of the CAS and the Guangzhou Institute of Energy Conversion of the CAS, the GEI and the CCS developed a Low-Carbon Policy Development Toolkit. The toolkit aims to facilitate low-carbon policy analysis and design in a particular administrative area based on the CCS' methods applied in the U.S. and adapted to the Chinese context. The GEI employed the toolkit and submitted a report to the NDRC in 2014, evaluating low-carbon policies in the twelfth "five-year plan" and making suggestions for the thirteenth "five-year plan." After successful experiments in Chongqing and Guangdong, the GEI signed contracts with research institutions in multiple provinces to formulate low-carbon policy plans for them. In 2017, the two organizations jointly developed the Renewable Energy Implementation Toolkit and tested it in Guangzhou. In the following years, the GEI extended the application of the toolkits to other provinces in China and a few foreign countries, such as Myanmar, Cambodia, and Indonesia.¹⁵⁴ The partnership of the GEI and the CCS received compliments from Xie Zhenhua and John Kerry, former Secretary of State of the U.S.¹⁵⁵

Since President Biden took office, Kerry served as special presidential envoy for climate and resumed climate negotiations with China. China's targets of hitting peak emissions before 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality by 2060 (30-60 targets), announced by Xi Jinping in September 2020 (Ding 2022, 51), became one of the central topics of these negotiations. In 2021, the State Council of China promulgated a guiding document and an action plan for peaking carbon emissions before 2030, and the national carbon emissions trading market was launched. In the

¹⁵⁴ See the GEI's 2019 and 2022 annual reports.

¹⁵⁵ News from the GEI's website, available at <http://www.geichina.org/john-kerry-xie-zhenhua-highlight-geis-us-china-low-carbon-development-partnership/> and <http://www.geichina.org/gei-graduates-from-us-china-ecopartnership-for-energy-and-environmental-cooperation/>, accessed December 12, 2017.

same year, the U.S. and China announced a joint statement in April and a joint declaration in November, which reaffirmed their commitments to reaching the Paris goals and their intention to establish a “Working Group on Enhancing Climate Action in the 2020s.”¹⁵⁶

8.2.9 Policy Influence of Greenovation Hub and the REEI

A group of young professionals working in environmental protection founded Greenovation Hub in 2012. Its Guangzhou office mainly engages in detecting and remedying water pollution in rural areas, while its Beijing office is a think tank conducting research on climate and energy, green finance, biodiversity, and ocean conservation (Fürst and Holdaway 2015, 45; Fürst 2016, 131-136). It also regularly participates in international environmental conferences. Greenovation Hub has conducted many research projects and published numerous reports and articles. Its primary means of influencing policies is to hold symposiums to discuss policy issues related to its research with invited government officials, experts, other organizations, and the media. It has established and maintained a good relationship with the official sector in this process. Sometimes, government agencies, such as the MEP, invite the organization to discuss policy issues. However, substantial policy actions were relatively rare in its history. The most prominent case occurred in 2013. Greenovation Hub and Green Watershed mobilized 49 environmental organizations to co-sign a letter to the China Banking Regulatory Commission to obstruct the establishment of the China Coal Bank initiated by 15 coal enterprises.¹⁵⁷ Eventually, the commission rejected the application of establishing such a bank. Despite this success, Greenovation Hub usually does not exert pressure on the government and generally adopts the mode of embedded pluralism. Although it sometimes cooperates with the GEI to conduct activities and benefits from the GEI’s connections with the official system, its policy influence is not

¹⁵⁶ In August 2022, China suspended the planned working group after Nancy Pelosi, then U.S. House of Representatives speaker, visited Taiwan.

¹⁵⁷ See its online news at <http://www.ghub.org/?p=1354>, accessed October 24, 2019.

comparable to that of the GEI.

Rock Environment and Energy Institute (REEI) is another think tank conducting research on environmental and energy policies. Its focal areas include carbon emission and energy transition, air pollution, solid wastes, and sustainable healthcare. Since its founding in 2012, it has established good relationships with some official institutions, including organizations with official backgrounds. For example, from 2018 to 2022, it conducted a joint research project on Energy Transition and Carbon Pricing with the China Association for NGO Cooperation; in 2019, it started to cooperate with the ACEF to draft Evaluation Criteria for Sustainable Procurement of Medical Institutions and they jointly conducted experiments with Peking University Hospitals in 2022; in 2019, it conducted a cooperative project with the MOH to investigate the usage of polyvinyl chloride injection equipment and disinfectant in medical institutions; in 2021, it participated in the air conditioning renovation of Huashan Hospital in Shanghai in partnership with the Green Hospital Committee of the China Association of Building Energy Efficiency under the MOHURD.¹⁵⁸ Like Greenovation Hub, the REEI held many symposiums based on its research and invited officials to discuss policy issues. Based on one of its 2014 reports regarding unreasonable subsidies to waste incineration power generation, a CPPCC member and an NPC representative from Sichuan Province submitted proposals in 2017 and 2019, respectively.¹⁵⁹ In 2018, it promulgated a report on air quality in subways of Hong Kong, Seoul, Beijing, and Shanghai, which attracted the attention of the Beijing Mass Transit Railway Operation Corporation. After face-to-face communication with the REEI, the corporation adopted some of its suggestions to improve air quality inside carriages.¹⁶⁰ In 2020, it submitted proposals for low-carbon

¹⁵⁸ See the REEI's 2019-2022 annual reports at <http://www.reei.org.cn/information>, accessed June 22, 2023.

¹⁵⁹ See the REEI's introduction of its publications at <http://www.reei.org.cn/publication>, accessed December 30, 2020.

¹⁶⁰ See the REEI's self-introduction at <http://www.reei.org.cn/about-us>, accessed October 24, 2019.

transportation to local CPPCC members in Shaoxing City, Zhejiang Province.¹⁶¹ In general, the REEI adopts embedded pluralism to influence policies.

8.3 Silent Pluralism

As mentioned before, not all bottom-up environmental organizations are active policy advocates. In fact, silent pluralism is identified in many of these organizations. Although a few may have active environment-related activities, they do not seek to influence environmental policies actively. Some organizations in this category lack both willingness and capacity to influence policies, while others with either willingness or capacity to influence policies still remain silent. Three of them, Wild China Film, the CFCA, and the SEE, are inclined to influence policies through other organizations. Like their counterparts in other fields, environmental internet websites are inactive policy advocates except for a few that developed into formal organizations. Students' environmental organizations generally maintain silence in the policy arena unless they acquire external driving forces.

8.3.1 Silent Bottom-up Environmental Organizations and Internet Websites

Women's Environmental Group (WEG) originated from the China-Canada Cleaner Production Cooperation Project in 1999. In the first few years, it focused on promoting awareness of gender equality and conducting environmental and health education for women. After the project ended in 2005, some activists within the WEG established the Beijing Lulan Cultural Communication Center. Since then, it mainly conducted environmental education for children and families. Thanks to insufficient funding and human resources, the organization has ceased working since 2014. Being short of both willingness and capacity to influence policies, the WEG had no record of policy participation throughout its history.

¹⁶¹ See its 2020 annual report.

Founded by a group of Beijing volunteers in 2002, Hanhaisha was an urban organization combatting desertification. In its early years, it conducted a few projects to enhance awareness of desertification among urban residents and support grassroots organizations in grassland areas to protect local ecology and culture. However, Hanhaisha was not involved in any policy or rights protection actions. From 2005 to 2006, it cooperated with Friends of Prairie to promote community development and aid students. Nevertheless, it did not emulate its partner's critical attitude and radical approaches in dealing with issues of policies and rights. Instead, Hanhaisha circumvented these issues. In 2006, Hanhaisha started sustainable living education for urban residents, which became the organization's new direction. As in the past, the organization avoided all policy issues. Hanhaisha has become dormant in recent years because of insufficient funding and human resources.

Funded by some entrepreneurs and family foundations in mainland China and Hong Kong, a group of urban young adults created the CNature Conservation Association (CNature) in 2006. Also targeting young people, CNature devoted itself to environmental education and spreading sustainable ideas and lifestyles by organizing participatory activities such as music festivals and design contests of fashions, posters, and trash cans. Although CNature invented many new forms of environmental education, it maintained silence on policy issues. Since 2017, the organization has become dormant.

Sinian Gongyi Information Technology Center (Sinian) provides other social organizations with technological services for creating and maintaining datasets and maps. It established the "green choice" dataset and online public interaction platform for the GCA and supported the IPE's project of Blue Map. It also provided digital services to the FON, the CECPA, and the U.S.-based Nature Conservancy. Although its technological support is vital for other organizations' efforts to

influence policies, Sinian itself has no record of policy activities. In this sense, it falls into the category of silent pluralism.

A similar organization is the Heyi Institute. Founded in 2014, the Heyi Institute specializes in capacity building, i.e., training and supporting grassroots environmental organizations. It also conducts research on the development of environmental organizations. However, influencing policies is rarely a part of its training programs or research projects. In organizations that received training and support from the Heyi Institute, some working in water or air pollution took a few policy-related actions.¹⁶² The Heyi Institute itself has never been involved in actions aiming to influence policies. Influencing policies does not appear in its self-introduction, constitution, and annual reports.¹⁶³

Beijing Green Hope Environmental Culture Development Center (GH) focused on ecological protection and developing green industries in the countryside, such as organic agriculture. Although it mentioned policy improvement to combat pollution in its list of organizational goals, the GH did not take action to fulfill the objective. Its organizational activities were fewer than most other environmental organizations, and the organization generally kept a low profile. Its self-introduction admitted that the organization urgently needed capacity building.¹⁶⁴ Insufficient organizational capacity was the reason for its silence in the policy arena despite its vocal interest in tackling policy issues. Since 2016, the GH has remained dormant.

Holding the belief in protecting nature using images, Xi Zhinong and his wife, Shi Lihong, created Wild China Film in 2002. This organization takes pictures and videos of wildlife and the natural environment to promote awareness of environmental protection and wildlife conservation.

¹⁶² It is based on the author's review of the activities of its program participants. The introduction of these activities is available at <http://www.hyi.org.cn/category/news/program>, accessed October 25, 2019.

¹⁶³ These are available at <http://www.hyi.org.cn>, accessed June 26, 2023.

¹⁶⁴ See <http://blog.sina.com.cn/greenhopecenter> and https://www.weibo.com/greenhopecenter?source=blog&is_all=1, accessed October 10, 2017.

As an organization of nature photographers, it has little capacity to influence policies even though it has realized the issue's importance from the outset. As a result, it relies on and sometimes facilitates other organizations to achieve policy goals. For example, Xi Zhinong informed Liang Congjie of the endangerment of Yunnan snub-nosed monkey and called for the FON's actions to save them (Sun and Zhao 2007, 127-128; Shapiro 2019, 124; Xie 2020, 90-91). For another example, in March 2017, Wild China Film discovered the potential negative impacts of the Jiasa River Hydropower Plant on endangered species, including the green peafowl. Instead of acting by itself, it brought the case to the FON and Shanshui. Coordinated by the FON, these three organizations sent an open letter to the MEP and held a symposium after a field investigation. However, Wild China Film and Shanshui did not join the EPIL filed by the FON in August 2017. Because Wild China Film usually focuses on nature photography while occasionally involved in policy issues relying on other organizations, it generally falls into the category of silent pluralism.

Founded in 2013, the Chinese Felid Conservation Alliance (CFCA) focuses on protecting 12 native Felidae species in China. Through conducting research and popularizing scientific knowledge, it improves public awareness of feline protection. Concentrating on the scientific and technological issues of protection, the CFCA seldom touches on policy issues. For example, even though it also favors community-based conservation, it does not seek to persuade local governments to endorse and sustain the model. Although the CFCA enrolls a few scientists, it has limited access to the government. Only in 2020 was the CFCA coordinated by other environmental organizations, such as the FON and Shanshui, to jointly submit the NPC proposals for the revision of the Wild Animal Conservation Law.¹⁶⁵

Unlike the organizations mentioned above with limited capacity, a few organizations have

¹⁶⁵ See Shanshui news at <http://www.shanshui.org/information/1979>, and the 2020 annual report of the CFCA at <https://homingleopards.org/download>, accessed June 26, 2023.

the capacity to influence policies, but they intentionally focus on providing services.

Liang Xiaoyan, co-founder and board member of the FON, founded the Beijing Brooks Education Center (Brooks) in 2003. As introduced before, she presided over formulating a new strategic plan for the FON as acting director-general in 2007-2008, prioritizing policy influence and interest representation. However, the primary organizational goal she endowed Brooks with is environmental education rather than influencing policies. In fact, Tianxiaxi, the Chinese name of Brooks, implicates the meaning of working in obscurity.¹⁶⁶ Since Liang Xiaoyan assumed the secretary-general and board member of Beijing Western Sunshine Rural Development Foundation in 2008, she has mainly switched to the domain of poverty alleviation through rural education and community development. Remaining a board member of Brooks, she still affects the agenda of Brooks. Brooks engages in rural education, including developing indigenous education (*xiangtu jiaoyu*) textbooks, training teachers, and establishing local libraries. Serving both adults and children, Brooks has conducted various forms of environmental education at schools and communities in urban and rural areas since its founding. However, influencing policies has never become a part of its agenda. For example, Brooks conducted the Project of Humans and Grasslands in 2006, influenced by the FON. Unlike the FON, Echoing Steppe, and Friends of Prairie, the project aimed to improve herders' livelihood and promote their communication with the outside world instead of monitoring environmental degradations and wrongdoings of governments and businesses, not to mention policy-related actions. Although a famous environmentalist founded and directed Brooks, the organization has intentionally avoided the policy arena.

GreenTV (or Green Island) was a similar organization to Brooks. It was created by Zhang Kejia, a former reporter and editor of China Youth Daily, in 2003. As a close friend of Wang

¹⁶⁶ See its self-introduction at http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_60d5f7ee0100dy0p.html, accessed December 13, 2017.

Yongchen, Zhang Kejia was an active environmental journalist who produced many influential reports, especially in the anti-dam endeavors such as Mugecuo, Yangliuhu, Tiger-leaping Gorge, and the Nu River (Lin 2007, 175; Mertha 2009, 1004; Han 2014, 179-180; Matsuzawa 2020, 682). She also sponsored the GEV's Environmental Salon for Journalists (Lu 2007, 60; Yang and Calhoun 2008, 83; Han 2014, 180). However, Zhang did not utilize GreenTV as a stronghold to influence policies except for joining some signature campaigns launched by other organizations. Instead, she gave the organization two missions. One was conducting various forms of environmental education, especially for students. The other was to serve as a comprehensive media platform broadcasting environmental news and programs. The central online platform of GreenTV was a website at www.greentv.com.cn. This website had an affiliated forum, but it failed to gain popularity, let alone policy-related activities.¹⁶⁷ Both GreenTV and its media platforms were under China Youth Daily, the official newspaper of the CCYL, which might partially explain the relative silence of GreenTV. Wang Yongchen (2010, 302, 305-306) documents the pressures Zhang Kejia faced within the newspaper office. After Zhang's retirement in 2006, GreenTV was separated from the newspaper. It gained more independence but simultaneously lost the capacity to fulfill its goals to a large extent. In 2016, its last media platform was closed, and the organization disappeared.

The Institute for Environment and Development (IED) originated from an international project called Leadership on Environment and Development-China, launched in 1994, which trained leaders in sustainable development. Li Lailai, a Ph.D. at the University of Pittsburgh and a former official in the Ministry of Transport of China, acted as its director from its founding. Its board and advisory group incorporated a few government officials, well-known environmental experts and scholars, and some leaders of environmental organizations. Jin Jiaman was also a co-

¹⁶⁷ According to the author's browsing the forum in April 2012, the average number of readers for each post was less than 100. No posts were calling for policy-related actions.

founder of the IED. However, the IED did not influence policies despite its advantageous human and financial resources and good government connections. Under Li Lailai's leadership, the IED mainly conducted economic and educational projects, including assisting with the financial activities of green enterprises, promoting corporate social responsibility, and conducting environmental education in the youth (Hildebrandt and Turner 2009, 94-95). Compared with some peer organizations, the IED underperformed in providing services or influencing policies, given its relatively high organizational capacity. As a result, it had to affiliate itself with the Fuping Development Institute (FDI) later, and Li Lailai left the IED. In 2008, a group of professional managers took its leadership and restructured the IED. This new leadership copied Li Lailai's strategy. It continued conducting economic and educational projects such as financing small and medium-sized green enterprises and educating youth about sustainable energy and climate change. In 2018, the IED was renamed Green Startups and abandoned environmental education. Since then, it has only focused on financing and supporting environmental startups. The organization did not take any policy actions throughout its history.

Aiming to control desertification in the A La Shan League of Inner Mongolia, a group of entrepreneurs started the Society of Entrepreneurs & Ecology (SEE Conservation) in 2004. It has implemented many projects on afforestation, water conservation, community development, and protecting the ecological environment and local culture to date. In 2008, SEE Conservation established that SEE Foundation, officially registered as the Beijing Entrepreneurs Foundation for Environmental Protection, to fund and award other environmental organizations or activists and support their capacity building. In addition, it conducts environmental projects by itself. As of 2022, SEE Conservation and the SEE Foundation had established 31 environmental project centers

throughout the country.¹⁶⁸ For convenience, SEE Conservation and the SEE Foundation may be called the SEE in this research. In October 2018, SEE Conservation established the Shenzhen Society of Entrepreneurs & Ecology in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province. This organization conducts water conservation and poverty alleviation projects and constructs an ecological education demonstration base in the A La Shan League. It has no policy-related activities.¹⁶⁹

Although the SEE has abundant financial and human resources, it limited itself to providing services and funding. Chang Cheng confirmed that the SEE funded many environmental organizations, including the FON, but seldom sought to influence policies.¹⁷⁰ The willingness of the SEE to influence policies has only increased in recent years. Nevertheless, it mainly exerts influence through other organizations. In 2012, the SEE and another two foundations launched the Blue Defenders project to combat pollution. By 2022, the project had funded 62 organizations in 21 provinces.¹⁷¹ As introduced in the FON and the IPE cases, many policy actions led by these two organizations derived from this project. In 2021, project participants submitted eight proposals to the NPC or the CPPCC and communicated with governments at all levels 1,338 times.¹⁷² The SEE also funded the IPE's project of Blue Map and the GCA's activities to promote green supply chains. In addition, the SEE has funded Shanshui and the GEI to develop community-based conservation in Sanjiangyuan since 2012. As introduced before, these programs catalyzed many policy actions. The SEE provided not only funding but also some access to policymakers to facilitate policy actions of other organizations. Since 2013, Wan Jie, former deputy president of the SEE and a member of the CPPCC, has submitted proposals regarding disclosure of

¹⁶⁸ The introduction of these project centers is available at <http://conservation.see.org.cn/Project/>, accessed June 27, 2023.

¹⁶⁹ See the organization's 2018-2021 annual reports, available at <http://www.see.org.cn/ALS/Article?m=113&t=0>, accessed June 27, 2023.

¹⁷⁰ The author's face-to-face interview with Chang Cheng on July 24, 2012, in Beijing.

¹⁷¹ See the program's introduction at <http://foundation.see.org.cn/Brand/Project/2019/1022/87.html>, accessed June 27, 2023.

¹⁷² See the 2021 annual report of the SEE Foundation, available at <http://foundation.see.org.cn/openness/Annual/>, accessed June 27, 2023.

environmental information and ecological conservation to the CPPCC almost every year as a support to the Blue Defenders project.¹⁷³ Occasionally, the SEE responded to signature campaigns launched by other organizations, albeit it never initiated such campaigns. In 2020, the FON coordinated with the SEE and other environmental organizations to jointly submit proposals for the revision of the Wild Animal Conservation Law, and the enactment of the Wetland Conservation Law and the fourteenth “five-year plan” for environmental protection.¹⁷⁴ However, these actions were rare in the history of the SEE. It did not take similar actions in the following few years. Generally, the SEE either remains silent on policy issues or influences policies through other organizations. It never brought forward its own policy initiatives. This indirect involvement in policy actions may derive from widespread caution and self-censorship in Chinese entrepreneurs (Chen and Dickson, 2010) or the marketization orientation of Chinese private foundations (Lai and Spires, 2021). According to Li Jin, then secretary-general of Beijing Vantone Foundation, most Chinese foundations focus on funding or conducting projects instead of influencing policies.¹⁷⁵ The SEE follows this trend. In this sense, the SEE falls into the category of silent pluralism despite its tremendous organizational capacity.

In the field of environment, the policy influence mode of internet websites is no different from that in other fields. Applying the filtering criteria developed before, nine internet websites in this field are studied, and none is outside the category of silent pluralism. The primary functions of these websites are reproducing environmental news, disseminating environmental knowledge, and promoting communication among users. Policy issues, including rights protection, are rarely

¹⁷³ See a report of the China Environment News at http://epaper.cenews.com.cn/html/2020-05/27/content_94369.htm, accessed June 14, 2023.

¹⁷⁴ See the FON's 2020 annual report and the SEE Foundation news at <http://foundation.see.org.cn/news/2020/1124/518.html>, accessed January 8, 2021.

¹⁷⁵ The author's interview with Li Jin on November 9, 2011, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Beijing Vantone Foundation changed its name to Beijing Woqi Foundation in 2017.

involved. Only the introduction of existing environmental policies is identified on several websites. Online forums affiliated with some websites, such as www.cbw.org.cn and www.qtpep.com, seldom discussed policy issues and never mobilized users to take policy actions. Even though some users mentioned policy issues, they could hardly become hot topics. Two of these websites, www.cbw.org.cn and www.green-china.org, organized some offline activities such as bird watching and tree planting, but those activities were not policy-related. Only those websites that developed into formal organizations could influence policies. For example, both Echoing Steppe and Friends of Prairie originated from internet websites. As introduced before, these organizations even adopt(ed) critical pluralism.

8.3.2 Students' Environmental Organizations

As explained in Chapter One, this research excludes students' organizations because of their limited capacity and independence. As a result, they are supposed to be generally inactive in influencing policies. Ho (2008b, 25-26) examines how the larger university Party structure ultimately controls green students' associations. Stalley and Yang's (2006) survey of university students in Beijing also discloses that they can hardly exert pressure on the government and support a contentious environmental movement. In the field of environment, organizations founded by university students or recent graduates are more prosperous than those in other fields studied in this research, which provides a more salient sample to test this proposition. However, provided a large number of students' environmental organizations¹⁷⁶ and limited space for this research, this chapter only studies seven intercollegiate environmental organizations. As more developed organizations, intercollegiate organizations usually have higher organizational capacity, degree of

¹⁷⁶ China has almost 3,000 college students' environmental organizations. See Lin Longchuan and Zhou Weiming. 2017. How Can College Students' Environmental Organizations Grow Healthily? *Chinese Environment* April 2017. It was available at <http://www.zhhjw.org/a/qkzz/zzml/201704/fmbd/2017/0424/6364.html>, accessed August 15, 2018.

independence, and more extensive impacts. If they remain silent in the policy arena, most organizations within individual colleges should be more inactive in influencing policies.

The CCYL Committee of Peking University and the College of Urban and Environmental Sciences at Peking University created the Environmental Education Base for Chinese University Students (EEBCUS) in 2007. Although it is within a university, the EEBCUS aimed to build a general environmental education and protection platform for all college students in China. It funded hundreds of research projects in many universities, held a few intercollegiate environmental forums, and attended international conferences. It also organized students in many universities to conduct environmental education in more than a dozen provinces and supported green campus projects at Peking University and member colleges. In addition, it organized many environmental activities for students, such as environment-related field trips and contests. In the history of the EEBCUS, it rarely touched on policy issues and took no actions to influence environmental policies. Many students' environmental organizations within individual colleges participated in projects and activities the EEBCUS funded or organized. In this way, neither were they involved in policy actions.

Green Society Environmental Action Network (GSEAN) was an online communication platform for environmental organizations when a group of college students and recent graduates established it in 2004. In 2008, it commercially registered in Chongqing and became a formal organization. In addition to holding forums and training sessions for students' environmental organizations, it conducted some local environmental projects. In 2010, the GSEAN moved to Chengdu and refocused on online communication. It publishes environmental news and information about many environmental organizations, including students' organizations. However, policy-related information is scarce on the platform, and no mobilizations of policy actions are

found. It also funds students' environmental organizations and facilitates their capacity building. Sometimes, the GSEAN conducts traditional students' environmental activities, such as environmental field trips, education, and contests. It has no record of influencing policies throughout its history.

The College Environmental Forum in China was founded in 2003 and registered as an independent organization in 2010 in Chongqing. The primary task of this organization was to promote communication and cooperation between college students' environmental organizations by holding annual forums. In addition, it trained personnel for these organizations to promote their organizational capacity. The organization had no record of policy actions. Major themes of the forums it held also included no policy issues. Founded in 1996, the China Green Student Forum was another intercollegiate organization that boosted communication between college students' environmental organizations and facilitated their capacity building. This organization also conducted many environmental activities for college students, including field trips, contests, environmental education, and protecting campus biodiversity. It ran a water conservation project to train young environmental volunteers for a few years. Similarly, it avoided policy issues and was not involved in policy actions.

Together with five other organizations, these two organizations started the China Youth Climate Action Network (CYCAN) in 2007. In 2012, the CYCAN registered as an independent organization in Guangzhou. The CYCAN has devoted itself to popularizing knowledge of climate change in students and promoting communication and cooperation, such as international exchange, among college students' environmental organizations to combat climate change (Dai et al. 2017, 42). As of 2021, more than 500 colleges had participated in activities initiated by the CYCAN.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁷ See online news at http://cegc.npi.org.cn/about/award_detail/id/1264.html, accessed June 28, 2023.

Like other students' environmental organizations, it conducted projects of green campus construction and organized environmental education, contests, and field trips. It also regularly attended important international conferences on climate change. However, none of these activities was policy-oriented. In fact, the CYCAN intentionally stays away from policy actions. Its constitution states that all its activities should not involve politics, religion, or legislative affairs. For example, in 2014, the CYCAN and Massachusetts Institute of Technology jointly launched a project called MyH2O, which created and maintained an online water quality map in China relying on student volunteers to measure water quality and conduct research throughout the country.¹⁷⁸ Unlike the IPE's Blue Map project, however, the MyH2O project did not lead to any policy actions and policy outcomes. Generally, the CYCAN falls into the category of silent pluralism, although it has conducted many environmental activities with college students.

Not all students' environmental organizations abstain from policy actions. Some of them could be involved in such actions with external driving forces. However, once external driving forces disappear, they fall back into silent pluralism. The aforementioned Chinese Universities Union for the Protection of Animals, organized by the ARB, is an example. Directed by the ARB, students' organizations in the union called for enacting special legislation for animal welfare and sent materials advocating for incorporating animal welfare into schools' educational plans to local education administrative agencies, albeit these efforts were fruitless. As the ARB gradually withdrew from the union later because of financial difficulties, the union became silent on policy issues.

Another typical example is the Green Camp of University Students in China (Green Camp), founded by Tang Xiyang, a well-known environmental writer, in 1996 (Xie 2009, 90). The

¹⁷⁸ See online news at <https://www.chinawaterrisk.org/interviews/myh2o-test-your-water/>, accessed August 14, 2018.

major activity of Green Camp is to organize environmental field trips for college students and other environmentalists. They usually shared their experiences after the trips through public lectures, photo exhibitions, media reports, and investigation reports. In its first decade, Green Camp tried to influence public policies through Tang Xiyang's participation and supervision. In 1996, Green Camp traveled to Yunnan and joined the FON's battle to save Yunnan snub-nosed monkey (Litzinger 2007, 290; Sun and Zhao 2007, 128). Green Camp chose a typical ecological area every year for field investigation in the following years and submitted reports with policy proposals to local governments. For example, it investigated nature reserves in Xinjiang in 1999 and 2000. After discovering problems of ecological damage, it actively informed local governments and submitted its proposals, including quite some criticisms of local policies. However, as Tang Xiyang gradually quit Green Camp with advancing age, its policy function faded out. In addition to field trips, Green Camp has conducted environmental education, including training nature narrators, since 2007. Although the organization has many activities every year, it is no longer involved in any policy actions.¹⁷⁹

8.4 Conclusion

This chapter studies the policy influence of bottom-up environmental organizations. Applying the analytical framework developed in this research, it finds varied modes of policy influence in these organizations. All three modes of policy (non)influence are identified, and each category includes a bunch of organizations. In fact, a few well-known environmental organizations adopt different modes to influence policies.

The GEV and the FON, the two oldest environmental organizations in China, act as pioneering guards in the category of critical pluralism. They led the most classic anti-dam battles,

¹⁷⁹ Annual reviews of its activities from 1996-2022 are available at <http://www.green-camp.org.cn/introduction>, accessed June 28, 2023.

such as the Nu River and the Xiaonanhai anti-dam actions. While both organizations insist on traditional campaign-style movements relying on public mobilization, the FON is becoming more professionalized and increasingly employing institutional channels. Its active lobbying for the EPIL system and practices of filing EPILs serve as an example. Its great efforts in influencing environmental policies have made the FON the vanguard in not only environmental organizations but all social organizations in the country. Other organizations adopting critical pluralism, such as the IPE, the ARB, Echoing Steppe, and Green Beagle/Nature University, also show critical attitudes and persistent application of relatively aggressive approaches in their policy actions. In contrast to the other cluster of organizations that adopted critical pluralism in the health field, these flourishing environmental organizations benefit from a relatively tolerant political atmosphere and increasing domestic funds. As found before, organizations in the category of critical pluralism have disappeared or never existed in other fields in this research. To date, the field of environment is the only field in which a number of organizations adopting critical pluralism not only survived but are thriving. However, two environmental organizations adopting critical pluralism also suffered from state oppression. Friends of Prairie was forced to shut down while the Ocean Protection Commune was gradually stifled. Their adversities might result from the pursuits of some special forces within the official system they had offended. Of all the bottom-up environmental organizations studied in this research, only these two underwent state oppression. This is consistent with the previous finding that the state tends to suppress social organizations adopting critical pluralism.

Not all bottom-up environmental organizations take a critical attitude toward the state. Taking advantage of the relatively tolerant political atmosphere and increasing domestic funds, those environmental organizations adopting embedded pluralism have also made significant

progress in influencing policies. Some of these organizations rely on existing identities and connections with official institutions, such as the GEI, the CLAPV, Shanshui, the CWA, and Angel Fund, while others have gradually cultivated channels into the official system, such as the GVB, the EFRC, the BGC, Greenovation Hub, and the REEI. Although they usually do not launch breath-taking environmental campaigns, especially those confronting official actors, their persistent daily work could also significantly influence policies. Based on concrete theoretical basis and legal practice, the CLAPV has played a role in almost all critical environmental legislation. The GEI has also made remarkable achievements in multiple policy areas. Pushing forward U.S.-China climate cooperation and conducting policy-related projects in various countries, its unique role on the international stage is particularly salient. These two organizations and the GVB are well-known environmental organizations in China. However, they adopt a different mode of policy influence from that of the FON, the GEV, and the IPE. The policy influence mode an environmental organization takes is relatively stable over time. The GVB is the only organization that has shown signs of a downgrading in terms of policy influence in recent years. However, it still stays in the general category of embedded pluralism. This change resulted from the personal choice of its leader, Liao Xiaoyi, rather than state oppression.

Contrary to the common impression that environmental organizations are all active policy advocates, this research discloses that many environmental organizations maintain silence in the policy arena. Some of these organizations, such as the WEG, Hanhaisha, CNature, Sinian, and the Heyi Institute, lack both willingness and capacity to influence policies. A few of them show some interest in influencing policies but rarely take action by themselves because of insufficient capacity. These include the GH, Wild China Film, and the CFCA. The latter two sometimes were involved in policy actions relying on other organizations. Another group in these organizations, including

Brooks, GreenTV, the IED, and the SEE, are unwilling to influence policies despite their advantageous resources and good government connections. Their leaders obviously used caution to get involved in policy issues. In addition to concerns over political risks, the personal preferences of their leaders may affect their organizational strategies. Since 2012, the SEE has shown a growing interest in influencing policies. However, it usually exerts influence through other organizations. The inclination to influence policies through other organizations, displayed by three organizations in the category of silent pluralism in the field of environment, is not found in other fields in this research. In the field of environment, it may be easier for these organizations to find proxies or allies. In addition, the relatively tolerant atmosphere allows them to do so. Five organizations—the WEG, Hanhaisha, CNature, the GH, and GreenTV—ceased working in this category. It is the highest number among the three categories of bottom-up environmental organizations. As introduced before, all these organizations were beset by insufficient capacity. It seems that limited organizational capacity negatively impacts not only the mode of policy influence but also the chance of survival.

The policy influence mode of environmental internet websites is no different from that of their counterparts in other fields. They all fall into the category of silent pluralism. Only a few websites that developed into formal organizations could influence policies. This chapter also preliminarily studies students' environmental organizations. Consistent with the proposition put forward in the first chapter, they are generally inactive in the policy arena. In several exceptional cases, students' environmental organizations were involved in policy actions under the influence of external driving forces. Once external driving forces disappeared, they fell back into silence on policy issues.

All bottom-up environmental organizations in this research were established by elites

instead of victims of specific environmental disasters, which is consistent with Ru and Ortolano's (2009, 153-154) finding of characteristics of founders of China's citizen-organized environmental NGOs. Hsu C. (2017, 142-145) also describes the Beijing environmental social entrepreneurs as an elite circle. Therefore, there are no group-based environmental organizations in this research. As a result, the difference in policy influence of group-based and non-group-based organizations cannot be tested in this field. Although many environment-related mass incidents occurred in China, as briefly mentioned in Chapter Seven, they usually did not result in lasting organizations. The Party-state treats these events as highly politically sensitive and does not allow the existence of organizations generated from these events (Shapiro 2019, 114). To ensure survival, most environmental organizations avoid directly involving themselves in these events, although a few of them might limitedly intervene in some events in an ambivalent and tacit manner and make post-protest efforts to influence relevant policies (Johnson 2009, 190-191; Johnson, 2010; Rooij 2010, 73; Wu and Peng, 2014; Johnson 2015, 91; Fei 2015, 95-96; Liu et al., 2016; Wu and Edmonds 2017, 114; Tang, 2018a, 2018b; Zhang, 2018; Landsberger 2019, 154-158, 176; Zhang et al., 2020; Zhang, 2020; Huang and Sun 2020, 411; Wu and Martus, 2021; Sun 2023, 70). In this sense, the interest representation of bottom-up environmental organizations has limitations.

Table 8.1 also shows the categorization of the policy influence of bottom-up environmental organizations. This table provides a panoramic view of the policy influence of both top-down and bottom-up environmental organizations in China.

Table 8.1 Categorization of the Policy Influence of Environmental Organizations

top-down organizations	active state corporatism	ACEF, CEC, CSF after 2008
	passive state corporatism	CSF before 2008; most organizations affiliated with agencies (24); CBCGDF affiliated with the CAST after 2010
	symbolic state corporatism	most organizations affiliated with the CAST, including CBCGDF before 2010 (10)
bottom-up organizations	embedded pluralism	CLAPV, Shanshui, Angel Fund, CWA, EFRC, GVB, BGC, GEI, Greenovation Hub, REEI
	reduced embedded pluralism	GVB in recent years
	critical pluralism	FON, GEV, IPE, Green Beagle and Nature University, ARB, CSAPA, AITA Foundation, Union of Grassland, Echoing Steppe, Friends of Prairie*, Ocean Protection Commune*
	silent pluralism	WEG, Hanhaisha, CNature, Sinian, Heyi Institute, GH, Wild China Film, CFCA, Brooks, GreenTV, IED, SEE; internet websites (9); students' organizations (7)

Note: Organizations with “*” ceased working because of state oppression.

Chapter 9 UNDERSTANDING THE FACTORS SHAPING THE POLICY INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM CHINA

9.1 Introduction

Previous chapters disclose that various organizational and contextual factors shape the policy influence of social organizations. The differentiation between top-down and bottom-up organizations lies in their different distances from the official system. Within each category, organizations adopting different modes of policy influence also have distinct relationships with the state. As the foremost rule maker in the organization's institutional environment, the government supplies crucial policies and resources determining the organization's survival and operation. In addition, the government is the target of organizations attempting to influence public policies. Therefore, the relationship with the government is a critical factor that shapes social organizations' policy influence.

The government is not the sole actor in the organization's environment. In addition to the vertical relationship with the government, organizations must deal with horizontal relationships with other external actors, such as constituencies and other social organizations. These actors also provide essential resources to organizations in their policy efforts. As the analytical framework of this research shows, organizations embracing different policy influence modes connect with their constituencies to different degrees. A general trend is that closer relationships with constituencies are associated with higher levels of policy influence. Previous chapters also find that some organizations networked with other organizations, including international organizations in a few cases, to influence policies, especially in the health and environmental fields. Although the

outcomes of these networked actions were contingent on specific cases, the effects of relationships between social organizations on their policy influence deserve further studies.

Internal factors also determine the policy influence of social organizations. Previous chapters discover that both willingness to influence policies and organizational capacity affect organizations' policy engagement and achievements. To fulfill their goals, organizations willing to influence policies must have the capabilities to do so. In addition to mobilizing sufficient financial and human resources, organizational structures and procedures contribute to the policy influence of organizations. As found in previous chapters, formal organizations are more active and effective in influencing policies than informal organizations, and some informal organizations became more influential only after developing formal structures and procedures.

Based on anecdotal data, these findings shed light on understanding the factors shaping social organizations' policy influence in China. This chapter will further investigate these findings using quantitative data collected from the surveys conducted by the author in a subset of organizations in the original dataset. Applying multiple analytical methods, this analysis will provide empirical evidence to test the validity of these findings.

Although there has been abundant quantitative research on the policy influence of social organizations in the settings of democracies, similar research in the context of China only started in the last decade. A limited number of studies based on data from original surveys or other sources add important insights to our understanding of the topic and serve as a reference base. Based on a survey conducted in officially registered organizations in three province-level administrative divisions, Zhang and Guo (2012) and Guo and Zhang (2013) tested the effects of various factors on organizations' policy-related investment and interest representation, respectively. Using the same data source, Zhang and Guo (2021a) apply the fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis

(fsQCA) method to identify the configurations of multiple representational dimensions—representational mixes—and their elements that bring about a particular level of nonprofit advocacy. Employing the data gathered from two rounds of surveys conducted in organizations registered with three province-level administrative divisions¹, Zhang (2015, 2018) compares the changes in the effects of similar categories of variables on the outcomes of organizations' policy actions. Using the same dataset, Su et al. (2022) investigate the impacts of organizational autonomy on political or social advocacy. As a result of a nationwide survey conducted in environmental organizations, Li, Tang, and Lo's (2016) research focuses on organizations' policy-related investments and tactics used in policy actions. The article by Yu, Shen, and Li (2021) mainly investigates the effect of central government funding on public service delivery and policy activities of nonprofits in different regions of China. Their study resulted from annual surveys in 2013-2017 conducted by an independent third-party organization in those organizations that participated in the project of "central finance supporting nonprofits to deliver social services" (Yu et al. 2021, 193). Zhan and Tang (2016) surveyed environmental NGOs in different regions and studied the relationships between various organizational government ties and organizations' funding stability, management system, service delivery, and policy engagement and effectiveness. Guo (2023) conducts a quasi-replication study of Zhan and Tang (2013, 2016) in 979 social work organizations and draws similar conclusions, using results of a nationwide survey conducted by the East China University of Science and Technology in 2019. He (2023) investigates the impacts of government resources and political context on organizations' revenue diversification, advocacy

¹ These surveys were conducted at the Beijing municipal level and provincial level of Zhejiang and Heilongjiang provinces. In contrast, the surveys by Zhang and Guo (2012) and Guo and Zhang (2013) were conducted at the provincial level of Heilongjiang Province, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, and Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region.

engagement, and advocacy effectiveness, analyzing survey data of 89 environmental NGOs collected by NGO CN, a Guangzhou-based NGO, in 2017.

Compared with relevant research in the settings of democracies, most of these studies apply similar theories and test similar variables. However, except for the articles by Zhang and Guo (2012), Guo and Zhang (2013), and Zhang and Guo (2021a), all studies include variables describing organizations' relationships with the government and stress the importance of these relationships. It is a unique characteristic in the context of China thanks to the dominance of the state in organizations' environments. Following this line of research, this chapter also includes similar variables. However, the analysis in this chapter introduces several variables underexamined or unexplored by these studies, which is a contribution of this research to the body of literature. Furthermore, this research and these studies complement each other. As introduced above, these studies are based on data from either local-level registered organizations or a single type of organization. On the contrary, the data used in this research were from organizations at the national level, encompassing multiple organizational types and both registered and unregistered ones.

The following section will introduce the theoretical basis for this chapter and develop hypotheses for testing. The third section explains the data and methods applied in this research. The fourth section presents the analytical results. The fifth section will discuss some practical implications generated from the results. A conclusion follows.

9.2 Theoretical Synthesis and the Development of Hypotheses

Most studies on organizations' policy influence have related to several leading theories, including resource mobilization theory, resource dependence theory, and institutional theory. There have been no developments of these theories or any further theories in recent years (Almog-Bar and Schmid 2014, 27). In the context of China, scholars also primarily applied or tested these

theories in their quantitative studies on the policy influence of Chinese social organizations. This chapter will join the endeavor to test these three theories using the survey data.

9.2.1 Resource Mobilization Theory

Resource mobilization theory suggests that the more resources an organization can mobilize, the more effort it will devote to influencing policies and the better opportunities to achieve its goals. These resources include both internal elements, such as money, labor, and facilities, and external factors, such as constituents' support and linkages to other groups (McCarthy and Zald, 1977). The availability or unavailability of outside patronage thus significantly determines the extent of advocacy action (Jenkins 1987, 299). Cress and Snow (1996) develop a taxonomy of resources, including material, human, informational, and moral resources, i.e., endorsements and support by other organizations. Another aspect of resource mobilization theory underscores the organizational structure characterized by formalization and professionalization. McCarthy and Zald (1987, 379) argue that professional social movement organizations make it more likely that grievances among the citizenry will receive a public hearing and policy action. Staggenborg (1988) finds that formalized and professionalized organizations can maintain themselves and the social movement and facilitate coalition work than informal organizations. As Salamon (2002, 8) concludes, organizational age, resources, and professionalism may foster advocacy action under this resource mobilization theory.

Salamon (2002, 7-8) also introduces what he calls "organization theory," which contradicts resource mobilization theory. According to this line of theory, advocacy is a volunteer sport that is most likely to take place when organizations are young and volunteer-based. By contrast, as they become larger, older, and more professionalized, they will lose their commitment to advocacy (Lubove, 1965; Cloward and Epstein, 1965). Although a few empirical studies lend support to this

argument (Nicholson-Crotty, 2007; Verschuere and De Corte, 2015; Zhang and Guo, 2012, 2021b), Almog-Bar and Schmid's (2014) review of the literature on advocacy by human service nonprofits finds that more research verifies resource mobilization theory. In the context of China, only Zhang and Guo (2012) partially support this argument. Considering that findings in previous chapters of this research also generally concur with resource mobilization theory, this chapter develops hypotheses in line with this theory.

Organizational size is one of the common factors researchers employ in testing resource mobilization theory, as a larger size indicates more resources to influence policies. Guo (2023) finds that the income of an organization has a positive effect on its policy activities. Previous chapters of this research identify that many organizations actively influencing policies, regardless of top-down or bottom-up, are larger organizations in their fields. Adequate financial and human resources allow them to play essential roles in the policy process. For example, the GEI is known for its capacity to draw stable financial resources, and the three active state corporatist environmental organizations receive abundant resources from the MEP or the SFA.

Hypothesis 1a: Organizational size is positively associated with organizations' policy influence.

As mentioned above, resource mobilization theory emphasizes professionalization and formalization as critical organizational characteristics to sustain policy influence. Employees with professional training are more likely to understand political and policy processes and possess the skills and tactics to participate in shaping public policy. Formalization can streamline advocacy engagement by helping establish detailed rules and procedures for advocacy activities, coordinate advocacy efforts among organizational members, and incorporate advocacy workflow into organizational routines (Lu 2018, 186S-187S). In addition, professionalization and formalization

may increase access to government officials (Mosley 2011, 437). Many empirical studies have verified the positive effects of professionalization and formalization on policy engagement (Berry and Arons, 2005; LeRoux and Goerdel, 2009; Mosley, 2011; Marquez, 2016; Hwang and Suárez, 2019). However, a counterargument holds that formalization and professionalization would blur nonprofits' civic character and push nonprofits to focus on internal operation and organizational maintenance, crowding out attention to external constituency needs for social changes and policy dynamics (Lu 2018, 180S, 186S). Some studies support this argument (Cain, 1993; Alexander et al., 1999; Verschuere and De Corte, 2015).

In the context of China, this issue is inadequately investigated. Organizational formalization and professionalization have not been measured and studied except for Zhang and Guo (2012), who include a variable of professionalization and find its negative effect on advocacy activities by Chinese nonprofits. On the contrary, previous chapters of this research find that formalization and professionalization facilitate organizations' policy influence. In accordance with resource mobilization theory, formal organizations are more active and effective in influencing policies than informal organizations, and some informal organizations promoted their policy activities after formalization and professionalization. Most informal organizations, especially internet websites, maintain silence in the policy arena. The GAD, the Media Monitor for Women Network, Echoing Steppe, and Friends of Prairie developed into active policy advocates through formalization and professionalization.

Hypothesis 1b: The level of organizational formalization and professionalization is positively associated with organizations' policy influence.

Previous chapters find that some organizations have close connections with other domestic organizations and cooperate with them to influence policies. For example, a few organizational

networks played active roles in their respective fields, including the YFAG in the women's field, the CAP+, the WNAC, the CMTHF, the CHCN, and ITPC-China in the health field, the China Rivers Network, the CRWA, the CZWA, and the GCA in the environmental field. Interorganizational collaboration is generally recognized as a positive factor in organizations' policy influence (Lu 2018, 190S). These collaborations provide information, resources, and learning opportunities to participating organizations. They also form a more significant voice and reduce potential political risks for individual organizations in collective actions (Li et al. 2016, 107). Many studies find that inter-organizational collaborations foster policy engagement (Schmid et al., 2008; Leroux and Goerdel, 2009; Onyx et al., 2010; Mosley, 2011; Wang and Soule, 2012; Buffardi et al., 2017; Hwang and Suárez, 2019; Zhang and Guo, 2021b). A few studies on Chinese social organizations also support this argument (Li et al., 2016; Zhan and Tang, 2013, 2016).

Hypothesis 1c: Connections with other domestic social organizations foster organizations' policy influence.

As mentioned before, the analytical framework in this research displays a trend that organizations' closer relationships with constituencies are associated with higher levels of policy influence. In top-down organizations, connections with constituencies and policy influence decrease along the line of active state corporatism, passive state corporatism, and symbolic state corporatism. In bottom-up organizations, organizations in the categories of embedded pluralism and critical pluralism are more active in representing the interests of their constituencies and influencing policies than those in the category of silent pluralism. In some cases, constituents played essential roles in influencing policies. For example, Feminist Voices, the YFAG, Yirenping, the HHC, the OPO, China-Dolls, the FON, the GEV, the IPE, and a few other environmental organizations established extensive connections with their constituencies and relied on them in

policy activities. On the one hand, as an important mediating structure between the state and citizens, nonprofits act as social change agents to represent their constituencies in policy arenas. Constituents can directly bring community and societal concerns to nonprofits' governance agendas and promote nonprofit participation in policy activities to address those concerns. On the other hand, constituent involvement strengthens organizations and facilitates their policy efforts by contributing knowledge and expertise and amplifying their voices (Lu 2018, 187S, 190S). Many researchers have confirmed the positive effects of constituent involvement in organizations' policy activities (Brown, 2002; Guo and Musso, 2007; Donaldson, 2008; LeRoux, 2009; Guo and Saxton, 2010; Pekkanen and Smith, 2014). In the context of China, Guo and Zhang (2013) find a positive effect of organizations' participatory representation, defined as the participatory relationship between an organization and its constituents, on substantive representation, which occurs when an organization acts in the interest of constituents, in a manner responsive to them (Guo and Zhang 2013, 329). However, Zhang and Guo (2012) identify that constituent engagement does not affect organizations' policy-related investment.

Hypothesis 1d: Connections with organizational constituencies are positively associated with organizations' policy influence.

Research in the settings of Western democracies does not underscore organizations' international connections because nonprofits in these countries do not rely on international resources. However, the relationship with international entities is significant in the Chinese context because of its underdeveloped and constrained civil society. Chinese social organizations heavily relied on funding from foreign entities, such as international foundations, foreign governments, and multinational corporations. Furthermore, foreign entities also provided information and expertise by organizing conferences, workshops, and lectures (Li et al. 2016, 107). Previous

chapters of this research find that international entities have contributed not only funds but also ideas, approaches, and norms, including the knowledge and methods of influencing policies, to Chinese social organizations. International women's, LGBTQ, HIV/AIDS, labor, and environmental movements have affected many domestic organizations in the fields of women, health, labor, and environment (Wu and Nie, 2021). In a few cases, such as the compulsory domestic production of Lamivudine and U.S.-China climate cooperation, some Chinese organizations cooperated with international organizations to launch policy actions. Other researchers also note the critical role of international entities in the development of Chinese civil society (Yang, 2005; Tang and Zhan, 2008; Hildebrandt and Turner, 2009; Kang, 2019). However, the effect of international entities on the policy influence of Chinese social organizations remains unexplored in quantitative studies. This chapter will test its effect for the first time.

Hypothesis 1e: Connections with international entities are positively associated with organizations' policy influence.

9.2.2 Resource Dependence Theory

Resource dependence theory proposes that organizations are dependent on their environments for resources critical to their survival (Pfeffer and Salancik, 2003; Aldrich and Reuf, 2006). Because the organization does not control the resources it needs, resource acquisition may be problematic and uncertain. Other organizations, groups, or individuals who control the resources have power over the organization; therefore, they are in a position to influence the actions of the organization (Pfeffer and Salancik 2003, 258-259). As a result, organizations will (and should) respond more to the demands of these actors in the environment that control critical resources (Pfeffer 1982, 193).

Although many actors exist in organizations' environments, scholars and practitioners are particularly interested in whether nonprofits that rely on government funding are constrained in their ability or willingness to engage in advocacy (Child and Grønbjerg 2007, 262-263). As Chaves, Stephens, and Galaskiewicz (2004, 296) summarize, a resource dependence perspective suggests at least two paths by which government funding might reduce nonprofits' political activities: via fear of punishment for unwelcome political activities and via redirecting organizational attention, energy, and resources away from political activities and toward administrative activities made necessary by government funding. While the former path follows the don't-bite-the-hand-that-feeds-you mechanism, the latter implies that government funding would reduce all political activities, not just activities that challenge the funder. In line with this theory, some studies find that government funding constrains organizations' policy engagement (Smith and Lipsky, 1993; Alexander et al., 1999; Schmid et al., 2008; Guo and Saxton, 2010; Bloodgood and Tremblay-Boire, 2017). Zhang (2018) supports this argument in the context of China.

However, another line of thinking posits the reverse effect: a higher level of government funding will increase organizations' policy activities. This argument is based on what Salamon (2002, 8) calls the paradigm of partnership conception. This perspective portrays the relationship between the government and the nonprofit sector as complementary and cooperative. These two sets of institutions support each other to sustain their activities. Neumayr, Schneider, and Meyer (2015, 305) summarize two arguments that emerged in the literature to explain the positive effects of public funding on organizations' policy engagement. First, public funding enhances organizational resources and promotes the capacity to engage in policy activities. Second, the partnership provides organizations access to the government, which allows more consultation opportunities and influence. In addition, some scholars argue that organizations receiving

government funding are motivated to advocate more to protect their existing funding streams (Mosley, 2011, 2012; Verschuere and De Corte, 2015; Li et al., 2016; Zhao and Lu, 2018). Many studies conclude that government funding fosters organizations' policy engagement (Salamon, 2002; Berry and Arons, 2005; Donaldson, 2007; Nicholson-Crotty, 2007; Mosley, 2011, 2012; Pekkanen and Smith, 2014; Hwang and Suárez, 2019). In the context of China, a few studies also confirm the positive effects of government funding on organizations' policy engagement (Zhang and Guo, 2012; Zhang, 2015; Li et al., 2016; Yu et al., 2021; Guo, 2023). These studies suggest that nonprofits play an active role in managing the resource dependence arising from a reliance on government funding (Li et al. 2016, 105-106).

There is a relatively smaller body of research that finds no relationship between government funding and organizations' policy influence, supporting neither argument above (Chaves et al., 2004; Child and Grønbjerg, 2007; Neumayr et al., 2015; Buffardi et al., 2017; He, 2023). Therefore, diverse conclusions from all these studies indicate the issue's complexity.

The findings of this research reflect these complications. A few bottom-up organizations, including Zhicheng, Yilian, Facilitator, the BCLARC, and the FON, receive official funding and actively influence policies. However, some organizations that maintain silence in the policy arena also accept official funding, such as those established by persons from the health system in the health field. In addition, top-down organizations spread in the categories of active, passive, and symbolic state corporatism. All these organizations receive official funding. Following the classic resource dependence perspective, this chapter assumes that official funding reduces organizations' policy influence and will test the argument's validity.

Hypothesis 2: Official funding in organizations' revenues is negatively associated with organizations' policy influence.

9.2.3 Institutional Theory

Institutional theory assumes that the organization's external environment includes not only its resource environment but also its institutional environment (Meyer and Rowan, 1977, 1983). To survive, the organization conforms to the rules, norms, values, standards, and expectations prevailing in its institutional environment to gain legitimacy and resources. In this way, the institutional environment creates an "iron cage," restricting the organization's autonomy and activities (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Schmid et al. 2008, 583). The organization can hardly resist institutional pressures when it is heavily dependent on the source of these pressures (D'Aunno et al., 1991). In the organization's institutional environment, power is held by those who shape and enforce institutional rules and beliefs (Li et al. 2016, 105).

As Pfeffer and Salancik (2003, xv-xvi) point out, early versions of institutional theory tended to downplay the potential for strategic choice by seeing social rules and norms as taken-for-granted and, therefore, less malleable. However, subsequent developments of the theory have incorporated the idea of contests over legitimacy, norms, and values, and the possibility of changing the normative order through strategic actions and interactions (Scott et al., 2000). That is to say, organizations have the possibility to actively shape their environments and obtain support from environments by engaging in strategic actions. For example, Oliver (1991, 151-159) proposes five types of strategic responses, which vary in active agency by the organization from passivity to increasing active resistance depending on the institutional pressures toward conformity: acquiescence, compromise, avoidance, defiance, and manipulation.

In organizations' environments, the government is not only a critical funder but also the most important institutional actor monopolizing the policymaking power (Guo 2007, 462). As introduced before, the Chinese government allows for limited development of civil society but

uses various means to control it strictly. In order to survive and grow, China's social organizations must navigate a government-dominated institutional environment (Li et al. 2016, 113-114), which will significantly impact organizations' policy influence. On the one hand, they conform to the rules, norms, and values emanating from the government. On the other hand, they may strategize in response to the types and intensities of pressure from the government (Li et al. 2016, 113-114).

One crucial legal construction of the "iron cage" is the official registration system for social organizations in China. Hildebrandt (2013, 26) argues that the state has sought to formally manage social organizations through registration regulation. Through the registration system, the state constructs the notion of what an NGO is, defines its legitimate scope of activity, and limits its autonomy (Hildebrandt 2011, 973). China's unique dual registration system, introduced in Chapter One, is an example. To circumvent the obstacle, some organizations register as business organizations, some affiliate with other organizations as secondary organizations, while others remain unregistered and obtain no legal status. However, the legal registration status, especially the registration with the MOCA system, is widely recognized as an advantage for organizations since it means legitimacy, fund-raising convenience, tax benefits, and access to the government, although registered organizations may be more circumscribed in their service and policy activities (Zhan and Tang 2016, 593; Wang, 2023). Some researchers argue that registered organizations are likely to advocate more than unregistered ones (Hildebrandt, 2011; Zhan and Tang, 2013). Nevertheless, empirical evidence does not verify this argument. Zhan and Tang (2016) find that registration status does not significantly affect organizations' policy engagement and advocacy effectiveness. Li, Tang, and Lo (2016) discover that registered organizations have less policy-related investment than unregistered ones. Guo (2023) finds that organizations' registration levels do not have significant effects on policy advocacy. Previous chapters find that many active policy

advocates sought to register with the MOCA system, such as the Maple Center, the HHC, On Action, Beijing Huiling, and many organizations in the field of disability, and a bunch of prominent environmental organizations that successfully registered with the Chaoyang District Bureau of Civil Affairs, including the FON, the GEV, the IPE, the GEI, the EFRC, and Green Beagle. Therefore, this chapter assumes that MOCA registration is positively associated with organizations' policy influence and will test its validity.

Hypothesis 3a: Official registration status fosters organizations' policy influence.

The distinction between civil or bottom-up organizations (*minjian zuzhi*) and official or top-down organizations—as introduced before, they are also called GONGOs—is another notable institutional outcome in China, as NGOs in the West are seldom formally affiliated with the government (Li 2016, 54). This institutional arrangement creates an inborn identity difference between these two groups of organizations. Government affiliation produces many institutional benefits. Many GONGOs are equipped with more expertise and resources than civil organizations and enjoy preferential government access. In the eyes of the government, they are more trustworthy (Li et al. 2016, 111). As a result, the government may be more willing to accept policy input from them. In line with early versions of institutional theory, top-down organizations should have more policy influence than bottom-up organizations. However, empirical studies in China generate mixed results. Li et al. (2016) find that environmental GONGOs have more policy-related investment, while Yu et al. (2021) discover no significant difference between the policy actions of these two groups of organizations. Zhang (2015) finds that civil organizations are more influential in achieving policy goals. Nevertheless, his research in 2018 shows that the same variable is no longer significant. Based on the same dataset used by Zhang (2018), Su et al. (2022) identify that more autonomous organizations engage in more political advocacy. Following early versions of

institutional theory, this chapter assumes official organizations have more policy influence and will test the argument's validity.

Hypothesis 3b: Top-down organizations have more policy influence than bottom-up organizations.

Because the government monopolizes the policymaking power in organizations' institutional environments, the fundamental relationship an organization must deal with is its relationship with the government. In the Chinese context, becoming closer to the government can be desirable from an organizational evolutionary standpoint and can operationally place an organization at a comparative advantage (Hasmath et al. 2019, 281). Previous chapters find that many organizations with higher levels of policy influence have closer relationships with the government. In top-down organizations, both policy influence and closeness to the government increase along the line of symbolic state corporatism, passive state corporatism, and active state corporatism. In bottom-up organizations, silent pluralism generally has the most minor policy influence and the furthest distance from the government. Organizations adopting embedded pluralism, such as the ADVN, Zhicheng, Yilian, Facilitator, the BCLARC, Hetong, the CLAPV, the GEI, and Shanshui, make great efforts to build channels into the official system. Although organizations adopting critical pluralism do not regularly seek to channel into the official system as those adopting embedded pluralism, they neither oppose the state generally. Furthermore, they sometimes also cooperate with the state to achieve specific goals. For example, the FON and the ARB conducted joint projects with government agencies, and the GEV built good relationships with individual officials in the MEP, such as Pan Yue and Mou Guangfeng. Many studies confirm the positive effect of close government relations on organizations' policy influence (Zhan and Tang, 2013; Hsu and Jiang, 2015; Hasmath et al., 2019; Liu, 2020; Farid and Li, 2021). A few studies

also provide quantitative evidence for this argument (Zhang, 2015, 2018; Zhan and Tang, 2016; Su et al., 2022; Guo, 2023; He, 2023).

Hypothesis 3c: Close relationships with the government are positively associated with organizations' policy influence.

For many researchers, close personal connections (*guanxi*) with government officials reflect good government relations, which organizations draw on to influence policymaking and implementation (Zhan and Tang 2013, 386; Xie and Augustin-Jean, 2022; Guo, 2023; Ma, 2023). Provided the prevalent usage of personal connections in Chinese society, patron-client ties have more influence on policymaking than institutionalized channels (Zhang 2018, 729). However, some researchers consider *guanxi* a double-edged sword because good *guanxi* with the government may also constrain a civic NGO's independence and willingness or ability to engage in politically sensitive activities (Zhan and Tang 2016, 591, 596-597). Empirical studies provide mixed results. For example, Zhang (2015) finds that organizational leaders' former official status positively correlates with their policy influence. Nevertheless, Zhang's (2018) research based on survey data in the exact locations a decade later shows that this variable no longer has influence. For another example, Zhan and Tang (2016) uncover that environmental organizations with leaders who are current government officials or legislative body members are more likely to be engaged in policy activities. However, the effectiveness of these organizations' policy actions is not higher than that of other organizations. Furthermore, they find that most government ties, including organizational leaders' personal ties with the government, do not affect policy actions or effectiveness. A few cases in this research show that organizational leaders' personal connections with the government contribute to organizations' policy influence. The ADVN, Zhicheng, the BCLARC, and the GEI serve as good examples. Some organizational leaders had official backgrounds, and some

organizations hired people who had official backgrounds to cultivate personal connections with the government. For example, Wang Xingjuan, Guo Jianmei, Xie Lihua, Chen Mingxia, Wang Keqin, Liang Congjie, Wang Yongchen, and Jin Jiaman worked in official institutions. The Maple Center invited Lu Xiaofei, retired chief editor of China Women's News, and Ding Juan, a former expert in the WSIC, to be its major leaders as Wang Xingjuan quit the organization at an advancing age. This chapter presumes a positive relationship between personal connections with the government and organizations' policy influence and will test the argument's validity.

Hypothesis 3d: Personal connections with government officials are positively associated with organizations' policy influence.

9.3 Data and Methods

9.3.1 Data Collection

The data used in this chapter come from the survey of national-level social organizations in Beijing conducted by the author between January 2010 and August 2012. Seventy-four percent of the data were collected between January 2010 and June 2010. The survey instrument was a questionnaire designed by the author. Data collection methods included phone interviews, face-to-face interviews, and emails. The sampling list of the survey was derived from the directory compiled at the start of the research. Mass organizations and organizations without any clear contact information were removed. The resulting sampling dataset for the survey contained 212 social organizations, each of which was contacted. By the end of the survey, 117 questionnaires were retrieved. After examining the quality of these responses, nine organizations were deleted due to haphazard responses or too many missing values, leaving 108 valid responses. The final response rate was 50.94%. Removing mass organizations from the original directory was out of two considerations: First, lower-level staff members cannot answer questions on behalf of these

giant organizations, while senior staff members in these organizations are difficult to approach; Second, considering their special status and size, it may be inappropriate to compare their data with those of ordinary organizations.

The questionnaires collected organizational data on the following aspects: basic organizational information, management practices, inclination to influence policies, policy actions and outcomes, and organizational relationships with external actors, such as the government, constituencies, other domestic social organizations, and international entities. Some missing values were filled in later according to organizational websites or publications. A few missing values in continuous variables were recoded as the means of similar organizations, while a few missing values in some dummy variables were recoded as 0 on the assumption that some organizations holding negative answers to the questions might tend to avoid answering them.

9.3.2 Variables and Measurements

The survey might ask multiple questions in one area of interest. Each question was transformed into a variable. The variable with the fewest missing values was chosen to measure the area of interest. All the variables in this analysis have been used in the existing literature except for the variable of international relations. As mentioned before, it is a unique contribution of this analysis. Table 9.1 shows the measurements of these variables.

Table 9.1 Measurements of Variables

Variables	Measurements
Dependent Variables	
willingness	Respondents were asked if their organizations considered influencing policies. Responses are coded 1 for "never considered," 2 for "considered without plans," and 3 for "considered and made detailed plans."
actions	Coded 0 if the organization never submitted policy proposals to the authorities, and 1 if it submitted policy proposals.
effectiveness	Respondents were asked "when there are alternative policy options, has your organization successfully persuaded the government to choose the policy proposal advocated by your organization?" Responses are coded 1 for "never succeeded," 2 for "succeeded occasionally," and 3 for "sometimes or often succeeded."
Independent Variables	
<i>Resource Mobilization</i>	
size	The total number of full-time and part-time paid employees in the organization
formalization	Measured by a 0-13 scale that is the sum of 13 items, each coded 0 for "no" and 1 for "yes." These items are written constitution, written long-term plans of development, annual work plans, regular work summaries, project evaluation, self-evaluation, meetings of board or management teams, meetings of all employees, training activities for employees, own internet website, own publications, public relations department or personnel, and plans for public relations.
organizations	Respondents were asked "how do you evaluate your organization's relationships with other domestic social organizations?" Responses are coded 1 for "little connections," 2 for "limited connections," 3 for "somewhat connected," and 4 for "closely connected."
constituencies	Respondents were asked "how do you evaluate your organization's relationship with some certain social group your organization represents or with the general public?" Responses are coded 1 for "little connections," 2 for "limited connections," 3 for "somewhat connected," and 4 for "closely connected."
international	Respondents were asked "how do you evaluate your organization's relationships with international entities including governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, foreign enterprises, and other international entities?" Responses are coded 1 for "little connections," 2 for "limited connections," 3 for "somewhat connected," and 4 for "closely connected."
<i>Resource Dependence</i>	
official funding	The percentage of average annual revenue of the organization provided by the government or the sponsoring unit in the total average annual revenue of the organization in the past three years
<i>Institutional</i>	
MOCA registration	Coded 1 if the organization is registered with the MOCA system, and 0 otherwise.
official persons	The number of the organization's full-time and part-time paid employees who were working or had worked in the government or the CCP or their affiliated institutions
government relation	Respondents were asked "how do you evaluate your organization's relationship with the government?" Responses are coded 1 for "little connections," 2 for "limited connections," 3 for "somewhat connected," and 4 for "closely connected."
civil	Coded 1 if the organization was initiated by civil institutions or individuals only, and 0 if the organization has some official backgrounds.
<i>Control Variables</i>	
age	the age of the organization in years
environmental	Coded 1 if the organization claimed itself an environmental organization, and 0 otherwise.

9.3.2.1 Dependent Variables

The three dependent variables include organizational willingness, actions, and effectiveness of influencing policies, respectively.

The variable “willingness” is based on a survey question asking, “Has your organization considered influencing public policies?” The values are coded as 1 for never considered, 2 for considered without plans, and 3 for considered and made detailed plans. “Willingness” is an ordinal variable ranging from 1 to 3.

The variable “actions” is based on a survey question asking, “How many policy proposals has your organization submitted to the authorities in the past three years.” The values are coded as 0 for no proposals submitted and 1 for one or more proposals submitted. “Actions” is a dummy variable with two values of 0 and 1. The raw values of the original question are not used because it was later found that respondents had different understandings of the number of policy proposals. Some considered one action as one proposal, while others thought it meant specific proposals submitted in one action. However, whether the organization submitted proposals was clear. Therefore, the dummy variable accurately describes the policy actions of organizations.

The variable “effectiveness” is based on a survey question asking, “When there are alternative policy options, has your organization successfully persuaded the government to choose the policy proposal advocated by your organization?” The values are coded as 1 for never succeeded, 2 for succeeded occasionally, and 3 for sometimes or often succeeded. “Effectiveness” is an ordinal variable ranging from 1 to 3.

9.3.2.2 Independent Variables

To conveniently test the hypotheses above, this chapter groups most independent variables according to the three theories.

Variables Related to Resource Mobilization Theory

The variable “size” is measured by the total number of full-time and part-time paid staff members—employees—in the organization.

The variable “formalization” reflects an organization's formalization and professionalization level. It is measured by a 0-13 scale that is the sum of 13 items in the survey, each coded 0 for “no” and 1 for “yes.” These items include the following: written constitution, written long-term development plans, annual work plans, regular work summaries, project evaluation, self-evaluation, meetings of board or management teams in the past three years, meetings of all employees in the past three years, training activities for employees in the past three years, own internet website, own publications, public relations department or personnel, and specific plans for public relations. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for this index is 0.771, meaning acceptable internal consistency.

The variable “organizations” is based on a survey question asking, “How do you evaluate your organization’s relationships with other domestic social organizations?” The values are coded as 1 for “little connections,” 2 for “limited connections,” 3 for “somewhat connected,” and 4 for “closely connected.” It is an ordinal variable ranging from 1 to 4.

The variable “constituencies” is based on a survey question asking, “How do you evaluate your organization’s relationship with some certain social group your organization represents or with the general public?” The values are coded as 1 for “little connections,” 2 for “limited connections,” 3 for “somewhat connected,” and 4 for “closely connected.” It is an ordinal variable ranging from 1 to 4.

The variable “international” is based on a survey question asking, “How do you evaluate your organization’s relationships with international entities, including governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, foreign enterprises, and other international entities?” The values are coded as 1 for “little connections,” 2 for “limited connections,” 3 for “somewhat connected,” and 4 for “closely connected.” It is an ordinal variable ranging from 1 to 4.

The Variable Related to Resource Dependence Theory

The variable “official funding” is based on a survey question asking, “the percentage of average annual revenue provided by the government or the sponsoring unit in the total average annual revenue of the organization in the past three years.” It is a continuous variable converted to percentage points in this analysis.

Variables Related to Institutional Theory

The variable “MOCA registration” measures whether an organization is registered with the MOCA system. The values of this dummy variable are coded as 1 if the organization is registered with the MOCA system and 0 otherwise.

The variable “civil” measures whether an organization is a bottom-up or top-down organization. The values of this variable are coded as 1 if the organization was initiated by civil institutions or individuals only and 0 if the organization has some official background. This dummy variable is transformed from a survey question asking, “How was your organization initiated?” The values are coded as 1 for “evolved from some institutions of the government or the CCP,” 2 for “initiated by the government only,” 3 for “initiated by non-governmental sponsoring units,” 4 for “jointly initiated by the government, and civil institutions or individuals,” and 5 for “initiated by civil institutions or individuals only.” Organizations that chose 1-4 have some official

backgrounds and are coded 0 for the variable “civil.” Organizations that chose 5 have no official backgrounds and are deemed civil organizations. Thus, they are coded 1 for the variable “civil.”

The variable “government relation” is based on a survey question asking, “How do you evaluate your organization’s relationship with the government?” The values are coded as 1 for “little connections,” 2 for “limited connections,” 3 for “somewhat connected,” and 4 for “closely connected.” It is an ordinal variable ranging from 1 to 4.

The variable “official persons” is based on a survey question asking, “In your organization’s full-time and part-time paid employees, how many are currently working or have worked in the government, the CCP, or their affiliated institutions?” The value of this variable is the actual numbers respondents filled in, resulting in a continuous variable.

Control Variables

There are two control variables. One variable “age” is measured by the age of the organization in years at the time of the survey’s ending. Given their accumulation of resources, reputation, and experience, older organizations may have more policy influence. They may also have better opportunities to become professionalized and formalized. For example, He (2023) finds that organizational age is positively related with advocacy engagement and effectiveness. In this sense, organizational age is also an indicator of resource mobilization theory. Because most studies treat it as a control variable, this chapter follows suit. The effect of a variable is the same regardless of its position in a model.

The other control variable is “environmental,” which measures whether an organization is an environmental organization. If an organization claims itself as an environmental organization in the survey, it is assigned the value of 1 for this variable; otherwise, it is assigned the value of 0.

Because many researchers and practitioners treat environmental organizations as the vanguard of Chinese civil society, they are supposed to have more policy influence than all other fields of organizations. Therefore, only this variable regarding organizational fields is included in the analysis.

9.3.3 Analytical Techniques

This chapter applies univariate, bivariate, and multivariate analyses. Multiple regression is the primary technique in multivariate analysis. Because “willingness” and “effectiveness” are ordinal variables, ordinal logistic regressions are applied. The variable “actions” is a binomial variable. Therefore, logistic regressions are employed for analysis. A unique contribution of this research is to test three theories by juxtaposing and comparing three levels of policy influence.

9.4 Results

9.4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 9.2 shows descriptive statistics of all variables.

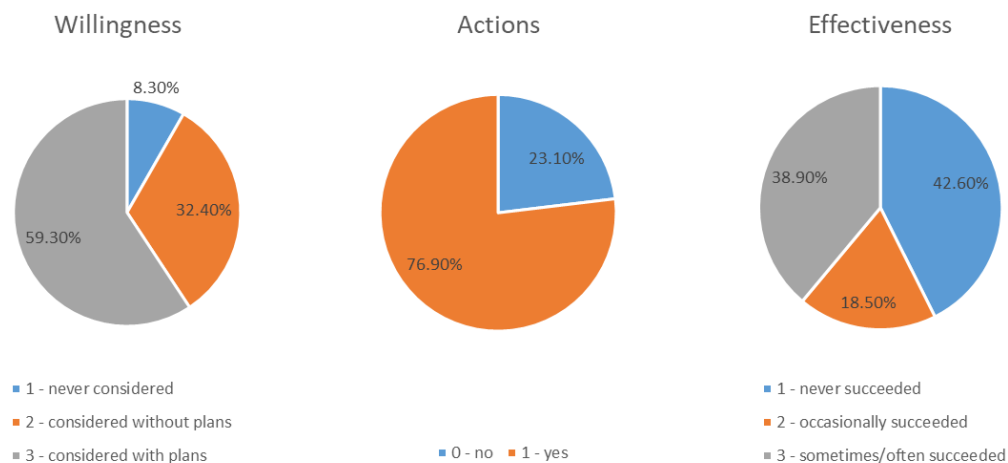
Table 9.2 Descriptive Statistics (N=108)

Variables	Mean	S.D.	Min.	Max.
willingness	2.51	0.648	1	3
actions	0.77	0.424	0	1
effectiveness	1.96	0.906	1	3
age	9.977	7.426	0.333	32
environmental size	0.31	0.467	0	1
formalization	17.19	18.569	1	140
organizations	9.56	2.617	1	13
constituencies	3.36	0.703	1	4
international	3.47	0.755	1	4
official funding	2.98	0.896	1	4
MOCA registration	0.093	0.173	0	0.917
official persons	0.44	0.499	0	1
government relation	2.76	4.587	0	20
civil	3.07	0.914	1	4
	0.7	0.459	0	1

Thirty-one percent of all cases are environmental organizations, making it the most significant type of organization in the sample. Seventy percent of these organizations are civil organizations, while thirty percent have official backgrounds. Forty-four percent of these organizations are registered with the MOCA system. Organizational age ranges from 0.333 to 32, with an average of 9.977. The sample includes both old and young organizations, although they were relatively young on average. These organizations have 17 employees on average; two to three of them were working or had worked in the government, the CCP, or affiliated institutions. The average official funding of 9.3% means the government funding was at a relatively low level then. Furthermore, the variable's wide range indicates the unbalanced distribution of government funding among organizations. The average formalization score of 9.56 shows that the structure of these organizations was somewhat formalized and professionalized. The means of those variables measuring organizational relationships with external actors are closer to the higher ends, indicating averagely close relationships between them. Similarly, the relatively high means of the three dependent variables show these organizations are not inactive policy advocates on average.

Figure 9.1 is the distribution of the three dependent variables.

Figure 9.1 Distribution of Three Dependent Variables

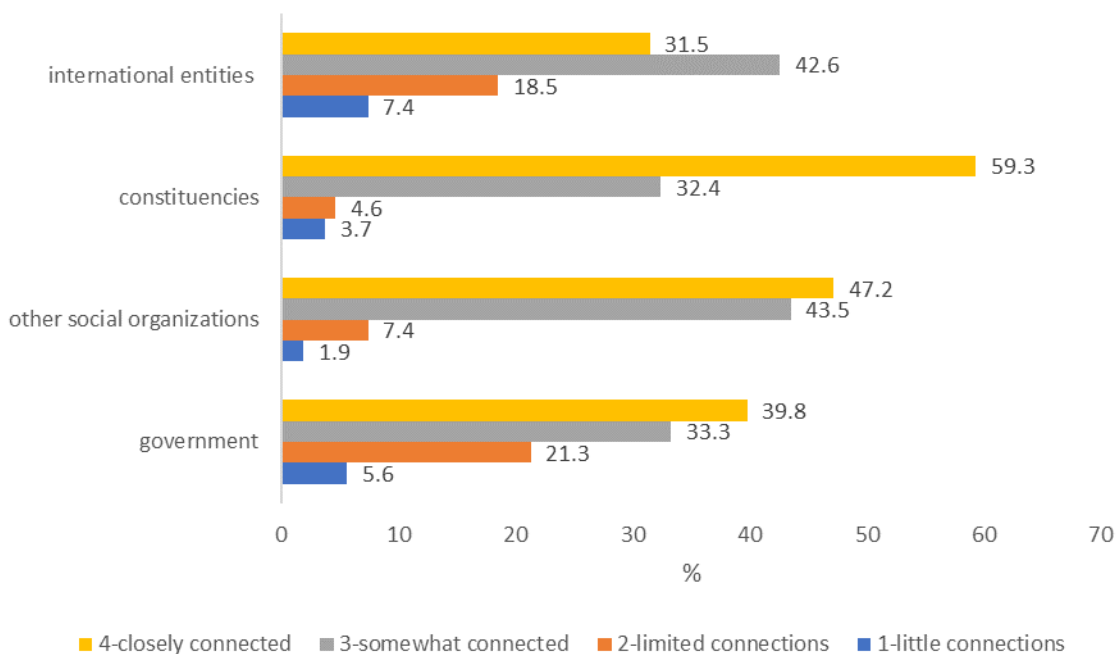


More than 90% of these organizations considered influencing policies, showing that a large part of Chinese social organizations at least have the intention to influence public policies. About 77% of these organizations took actions in practice to influence policies. It is higher than Guo's (2023, 723) finding that 67.6% of social work organizations participated in some form of policy advocacy. Two reasons may cause this high percentage. First, these national-level organizations in Beijing may be more active in influencing policies than smaller organizations in other locations of the country. Second, according to the structure of this variable, the threshold for taking action is low, as only one policy proposal in the past three years was counted as an action. In a national survey of 1,738 U.S. nonprofit organizations that are tax-exempt public charities, Bass et al. (2007) found that roughly 75% reported engaging at least once in critical policy activities. Both the survey question and the result resemble this research's, albeit in a different setting. However, compared with these two dimensions, the effectiveness of influencing policies is more difficult to achieve, which is evident in the fact that 42.6% of these organizations never succeeded in persuading the government to accept their proposals. In a survey of nearly 400 nonprofit organizations based in Seattle, U.S., Buffardi et al. (2017) discover that more than three-quarters of respondents reported

having enacted, stopped, or modified policy. Compared with their American counterparts, Chinese social organizations have lower impacts on policy outcomes.

Figure 9.2 displays the distribution of four independent variables indicating organizational relationships with four critical external actors.

Figure 9.2 Organizational Relationships with Critical External Actors



Most organizations claimed that they had some connections with these four external actors. Almost 60 percent and roughly 47 percent of these organizations maintained close relationships with constituencies and other domestic organizations, respectively. In contrast, only about 40 percent and 31 percent of these organizations maintained close connections with the government and international entities, respectively. It is relatively more difficult for them to gain access to and maintain close relationships with the government and international entities than constituencies and other domestic organizations. This trend holds when the categories of “closely connected” and

“somewhat connected” are combined. More than 90% of these organizations fall into these categories in their relationships with constituencies and other domestic organizations, compared to 73.1% in their relationships with the government and 74.1% with international entities, respectively. Conversely, 26.9% of these organizations had little or limited connections with the government, and 25.9% had little or limited connections with international entities, compared to 9.3% in their relationships with other domestic organizations and 8.3% with constituencies in the same categories.

9.4.2 Bivariate Analysis

Table 9.3 is the correlation matrix for all variables.

Pearson correlation coefficients between independent variables show that they are not highly correlated, indicating no obvious multicollinearity problem with the data. It is further verified by calculating VIFs (variance inflation factors) of all these variables using an OLS (ordinary least squares) regression with “effectiveness” as the dependent variable. All VIFs are less than 2, except that one is 2.58, which is far below the threshold of 10.

Table 9.3 Correlations among Variables (N=108)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1 willingness														
2 actions	.501***													
3 effectiveness	.478***	.586***												
4 age	0.11	0.158	0.149											
5 environmental	-0.102	0.088	0.138	.165*										
6 size	.193**	.187*	.347***	0.144	-0.066									
7 formalization	.435***	.448***	.458***	0.064	-0.086	.314***								
8 organizations	.351***	.346***	.212**	-0.057	-0.008	0.019	.386***							
9 constituencies	.287***	.199**	.327***	-0.007	-0.134	.258***	.290***	.222**						
10 international	.418***	.432***	.390***	.162*	0.103	0.066	.375***	.411***	.234**					
11 official funding	-0.143	0.011	0.033	.252***	.190**	0.05	-0.013	-0.149	-0.036	-0.025				
12 MOCA registration	-0.013	0.005	.202**	.306***	.236**	.253***	.171*	-0.009	0.008	0.06	.301***			
13 official persons	0.133	0.058	0.157	.240**	0.005	.422***	.286***	0.019	.195**	.185*	0.029	.357***		
14 government relation	0.141	.262***	.432***	.257***	0.076	.342***	.416***	0.089	.233**	.161*	.187*	.378***	.401***	
15 civil	.229**	.317***	0.063	-.374***	-0.04	-.236**	0.063	.277***	.165*	.191**	-.205**	-.521***	-.523***	-.348***

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.1 level (2-tailed).

In addition, Table 9.3 shows that correlation coefficients between three dependent variables and “size,” “formalization,” “organizations,” “constituencies,” and “international” are all positive and statistically significant. The coefficients between two dependent variables and “government relation” and “civil” are positive and significant. These results indicate that those independent variables may be significant factors shaping the policy influence of social organizations. Multiple regressions in the following subsection will provide more accurate evidence. Nevertheless, it may be inappropriate to introduce organizational willingness as an independent variable into multiple regression models with “actions” or “effectiveness” as dependent variables. Potential multicollinearity caused by too many common explanatory factors may lead to less reliable results. Therefore, this chapter avoids Zhang’s (2018) possible mistake of putting them in the same regression model.

The coefficients between the three dependent variables display moderately positive relationships. However, because all three dependent variables are not continuous, the Pearson Correlation Coefficients between them in Table 9.3 may not accurately describe their associations. Table 9.4 shows their associations by calculating four statistics measuring associations between categorical or ordinal variables.

Except for one value of the Somers’ d statistic for “actions” and “effectiveness,” all other statistics demonstrate that these three dependent variables are moderately and positively associated with each other. On the one hand, the three dimensions of policy influence are positively related and probably have common explanatory factors. On the other hand, they differ from each other to some degree and may need some different explanatory factors. Therefore, one dimension cannot replace the other two dimensions. Statistical evidence supports the application of the multi-dimensional definition of policy influence in this research.

Table 9.4 Associations between Dependent Variables (N=108)

	Kendall's tau-b	Kendall's tau-c	Spearman's rho	Somers' d ^a
willingness and actions	.423***	.37***	.436***	.344***
willingness and effectiveness	.44***	.385***	.473***	.478***
actions and effectiveness	.56***	.532***	.589***	.747***

*** significant at the level of .001 (2-tailed)

a: For Somers' d, in the first row, the dependent variable is "actions." In the second and third rows, the dependent variable is "effectiveness."

The results shown in Table 9.4 also verify the finding in previous chapters that organizational willingness to influence policies positively affects organizations' policy engagement. In fact, the results further show that organizational willingness to influence policies has positive effects on the effectiveness of influencing policy outcomes. These findings are consistent with common sense. It is unreasonable to imagine that an active policy advocate with remarkable achievements is not motivated to influence policies. Univariate regression models show similar results. However, as analyzed above, these three dependent variables will not enter multiple regression models as independent variables in this research.

A limitation of this quantitative analysis is the relatively small sample size, which does not allow many independent variables in multiple regression models because of the potential loss of degrees of freedom. Consequently, only the variable "environmental" is included in multiple regression models instead of introducing more dummy variables representing more fields of organizations into the models. Another reason is that only environmental organizations in the dataset have sufficient observations to operate meaningful analyses. Each of the other fields of organizations only has about a dozen observations or even fewer, precluding rigorous statistical analyses and reliable results. However, after coding each field of organization as a dummy variable,

bivariate analyses were still conducted as exploratory tests. Univariate regression models show that none of these dummy variables is a statistically significant predictor of the three dependent variables, including the variable “environmental.” Chi-square tests of independence using contingency tables generate similar results. It seems that no one field of organization significantly has more policy influence than other fields of organizations, irrespective of which dimension of policy influence is considered. Excluding environmental organizations, results for other organizations might reflect the realities, whereas their validity could be open to question.

9.4.3 Multivariate Analysis

Table 9.5 shows the results of ordinal logistic regressions with “willingness” as the dependent variable. Table 9.6 shows the results of logistic regressions with “actions” as the dependent variable, and Table 9.7 shows the results of ordinal logistic regressions with “effectiveness” as the dependent variable.

All these models pass omnibus tests—likelihood-ratio chi-square tests. Furthermore, all ordinal logistic regression models have insignificant chi-square statistics at the level of 0.1 in parallel lines tests, which means these models do not violate the proportional odds assumption.

Table 9.5 Ordinal Logistic Regressions of Willingness to Influence Policies

("willingness" as the dependent variable, N=108)

	Model 1		Model 2 ^S		Model 3	
	Parameter Estimate	Odds ratios	Parameter Estimate	Odds ratios	Parameter Estimate	Odds ratios
Control Variables						
age	0.069** (0.034)	1.072	0.061* (0.035)	1.063	0.064* (0.036)	1.066
environmental	-0.574 (0.496)	0.563	-0.771 (0.508)	0.463	-0.778 (0.51)	0.459
Resource Mobilization						
size	0.013 (0.017)	1.013	0.013 (0.018)	1.013	0.012 (0.018)	1.012
formalization	0.224** (0.106)	1.251	0.233** (0.108)	1.262	0.236** (0.109)	1.266
organizations	0.336 (0.37)	1.400	0.304 (0.376)	1.355	0.29 (0.378)	1.337
constituencies	0.192 (0.318)	1.213	0.315 (0.326)	1.370	0.313 (0.327)	1.367
international	0.585** (0.288)	1.794	0.665** (0.297)	1.945	0.481 (0.524)	1.618
Resource Dependence						
official funding	-1.569 (1.281)	0.208	-1.705 (1.296)	0.182	-1.649 (1.312)	0.192
Institutional						
MOCA registration	0.008 (0.574)	1.008	0.141 (0.578)	1.152	0.135 (0.581)	1.144
official persons	0.049 (0.078)	1.050	-0.019 (0.084)	0.981	-0.013 (0.085)	0.987
government relation	-0.029 (0.302)	0.971	1.608** (0.807)	4.992	1.603** (0.809)	4.967
civil	1.3* (0.734)	3.672	7.307** (2.92)	1491.400	6.687** (3.314)	801.649
Interaction Terms						
civil-government relation			-1.833** (0.858)	0.160	-1.841** (0.858)	0.159
civil-international					0.247 (0.595)	1.280
Constant-1	4.019** (1.589)	55.666	9.806*** (3.27)	1.81E+04	9.326*** (3.465)	1.12E+04
Constant-2	6.838*** (1.709)	932.892	12.794*** (3.424)	3.60E+05	12.303*** (3.615)	2.20E+05
Parallel Lines Test Chi-Square	11.019		1.86		1.802	
Omnibus Test Chi-Square	42.317***		46.876***		47.034***	
AIC	174.262		171.703		173.544	

*p<0.1 **p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Parentheses show standard errors.

S: selected model

Table 9.6 Logistic Regressions of Actions to Influence Policies
 (“actions” as the dependent variable, N=108)

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3 ^S	
	Parameter Estimate	Odds ratios	Parameter Estimate	Odds ratios	Parameter Estimate	Odds ratios
Control Variables						
age	0.101* (0.058)	1.107	0.115* (0.066)	1.122	0.144* (0.08)	1.155
environmental	-0.034 (0.808)	0.967	-0.112 (0.833)	0.894	0.21 (0.976)	1.234
Resource Mobilization						
size	0.061 (0.042)	1.063	0.065 (0.047)	1.067	0.103 (0.065)	1.109
formalization	0.284 (0.18)	1.328	0.342* (0.191)	1.408	0.365* (0.206)	1.440
organizations	0.547 (0.582)	1.727	0.459 (0.59)	1.583	0.665 (0.653)	1.945
constituencies	-0.569 (0.545)	0.566	-0.406 (0.591)	0.666	-0.287 (0.635)	0.751
international	1.142** (0.52)	3.135	1.247** (0.53)	3.480	4.048** (1.69)	57.306
Resource Dependence						
official funding	-0.037 (1.894)	0.963	-0.207 (2.033)	0.813	-0.713 (2.18)	0.490
Institutional						
MOCA registration	-0.257 (1.034)	0.773	-0.179 (1.035)	0.836	-0.411 (1.164)	0.663
official persons	-0.073 (0.109)	0.930	-0.165 (0.134)	0.848	-0.33* (0.179)	0.719
government relation	1.323** (0.54)	3.753	2.791** (1.272)	16.291	4.294** (1.848)	73.245
civil	3.735*** (1.22)	41.869	9.561** (4.572)	14194.889	24.538** (9.793)	4.54E+10
Interaction Terms						
civil-government relation			-1.902 (1.4)	0.149	-3.457* (1.929)	0.032
civil-international					-3.566** (1.784)	0.028
Constant	-11.86*** (3.506)	0.000	-17.775*** (5.865)	0.000	-32.134*** (10.608)	0.000
Omnibus Test Chi-Square	58.491***		60.624***		67.231***	
AIC	82.378		82.245		77.638	

*p<0.1 **p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Parentheses show standard errors.

S: selected model

Table 9.7 Ordinal Logistic Regressions of Effectiveness to Influence Policies
 (“effectiveness” as the dependent variable, N=108)

	Model 1 ^s		Model 2		Model 3	
	Parameter Estimate	Odds ratios	Parameter Estimate	Odds ratios	Parameter Estimate	Odds ratios
Control Variables						
age	0.018 (0.033)	1.018	0.018 (0.033)	1.018	0.017 (0.034)	1.017
environmental	0.609 (0.497)	1.839	0.509 (0.505)	1.664	0.564 (0.508)	1.757
Resource Mobilization						
size	0.046** (0.02)	1.047	0.044** (0.02)	1.045	0.049** (0.02)	1.050
formalization	0.243** (0.115)	1.275	0.254** (0.116)	1.289	0.244** (0.117)	1.276
organizations	-0.328 (0.4)	0.721	-0.309 (0.401)	0.734	-0.214 (0.407)	0.807
constituencies	0.699** (0.345)	2.012	0.774** (0.353)	2.169	0.844** (0.36)	2.325
international	1.042*** (0.336)	2.834	1.07*** (0.338)	2.915	1.953*** (0.688)	7.047
Resource Dependence						
official funding	-0.541 (1.342)	0.582	-0.637 (1.35)	0.529	-0.949 (1.396)	0.387
Institutional						
MOCA registration	0.128 (0.569)	1.137	0.155 (0.569)	1.168	0.025 (0.576)	1.025
official persons	-0.159** (0.069)	0.853	-0.191** (0.077)	0.826	-0.246*** (0.088)	0.782
government relation	1.1*** (0.341)	3.003	2.15** (1.022)	8.586	2.409** (1.131)	11.119
civil	0.416 (0.752)	1.516	4.39 (3.675)	80.652	8.151* (4.83)	3465.838
Interaction Terms						
civil-government relation			-1.165 (1.05)	0.312	-1.376 (1.141)	0.252
civil-international					-1.137 (0.74)	0.321
Constant-1	10.679*** (2.184)	4.34E+04	14.754*** (4.375)	2.56E+06	18.269*** (5.45)	8.59E+07
Constant-2	11.981*** (2.261)	1.60E+05	16.067*** (4.428)	9.50E+06	19.605*** (5.502)	3.27E+08
Parallel Lines Test Chi-Square	18.265		15.824		3.503	
Omnibus Test Chi-Square	65.704***		66.994***		69.525***	
AIC	193.584		196.93		197.43	

*p<0.1 **p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Parentheses show standard errors.

S: selected model

As Li, Tang, and Lo (2016, 104) explain, because governments in democratic countries seldom possess formally affiliated NGOs, there is virtually no discussion of how civil organizations and GONGOs may differ in their policy influence in these settings. However, their difference may be significant in China. Furthermore, the effects of some explanatory variables may also differ in these two groups of organizations, making interactive effects worthy of investigation. Li, Tang, and Lo (2016) examine the interactive effect between government funding and government affiliation and find that the impacts of government funding on organizations' policy influence significantly differ by government affiliation. Inspired by their research, this chapter tests interaction terms between "civil" and other independent variables. The results show that significant interactive effects exist between "civil" and "government relation" and between "civil" and "international" in a few models. Therefore, these two interaction terms are added to the original models. Model 1 in each table is the original model without interaction terms. Model 2 in each table contains the interaction term of "civil·government relation" only, while Model 3 in each table includes both interaction terms of "civil·government relation" and "civil·international."

Because each table encompasses multiple models, the model selection problem must be resolved. This chapter applies two criteria to evaluate model fit and select models. One criterion is that the added interaction term(s) should be statistically significant. The other criterion is that the selected model in a table should have the lowest AIC (Akaike Information Criterion) value across the three models. AIC is the best statistic chosen in this chapter for comparing the goodness of fit among different models.² A lower value means a better fit. In Table 9.5, the interaction term

²According to Williams' explanation, AIC and BIC (Bayesian Information Criterion) have become increasingly popular than other measures, such as Pseudo R^2 , to assess the fit of a model and compare competing models because they have some inherent advantages. One advantage is that AIC and BIC have penalties for including variables that do not significantly improve fit. As a result, they can lead to more parsimonious but adequate models. See his online paper at <https://www3.nd.edu/~rwilliam/stats3/L05.pdf>, accessed Mar. 5, 2023. In addition, it is widely recognized that the AIC statistic penalizes complex models less than the BIC statistic, meaning that the BIC method is more likely to choose too simple models.

of “civil·government relation” is significant in Model 2 and Model 3, while the interaction term of “civil·international” is not significant in Model 3. In addition, the AIC value of Model 2 is the lowest among these three models. Therefore, Model 2 is selected. Likewise, in Table 9.6, both interaction terms are significant in Model 3, and this model has the lowest value of AIC. As a result, Model 3 is selected as the best model in this table. No interaction terms are significant in Table 9.7, and Model 1 has the lowest AIC value, meaning Model 1 offers the best fit in this table. Thus, Model 1 is selected in Table 9.7. Selected models are highlighted in bold characters. Once models with the best fit are confirmed, only the data in these selected models are analyzed.

In all these models, positive coefficients mean positive effects of independent variables on dependent variables, while negative coefficients mean negative effects of independent variables on dependent variables. The odds ratio for each coefficient is also reported.

9.4.3.1 Findings Related to Resource Mobilization Theory

The multiple regression results support resource mobilization theory. In the five variables related to this theory, “formalization” and “international” are statistically significant in all three selected models. Their positive coefficients demonstrate that they are positively associated with willingness, actions, and effectiveness of policy influence, which is strong evidence to support hypotheses 1b and 1e. The effect of international connections on policy actions is the most prominent. As international connections increase by one level, the estimated odds of submitting policy proposals increase more than 56 times, holding other variables constant. Previous chapters find that informal organizations can hardly act and effectively influence policies. Formalization and professionalization contributed to their capacity building and boosted their policy engagement

See online tutorials at <https://machinelearningmastery.com> and <https://vitalflux.com>, accessed Mar. 5, 2023. To test three theories, the models included in this chapter cannot be too simple because some insignificant variables need to be kept. Therefore, AIC is the best statistic for model selection in this chapter.

and impact. In addition, many organizations embracing connections with international entities are active and influential in influencing policies. Statistical analysis provides strong evidence for these findings.

As mentioned before, organizational formalization and professionalization are underexamined in the existing literature. Only Zhang and Guo (2012) include a variable of professionalization and find its negative effect on Chinese nonprofits' policy activities. However, they only use a single measurement of professionalization in their study, leaving out other professionalization and formalization factors. In contrast, this research provides a more robust result by employing a composite index to measure formalization and professionalization. In addition, this research finds that formalization and professionalization foster not only organizations' policy actions but also their willingness and effectiveness to influence policies. They serve as a factor that comprehensively facilitates organizations' policy influence. Therefore, the argument against resource mobilization theory in terms of organizational professionalization and formalization does not hold in the context of China.

Although some researchers note the positive role of international connections in the development of Chinese civil society, this effect has never been tested in empirical studies. This research fills in the blank by introducing such a factor and proves its positive effects on organizations' policy influence. However, the effects of this factor have some nuances. The interaction term "civil·international" is significant in the selected model in Table 9.6, indicating that the effects of "international" on policy actions differ in civil organizations and official organizations. For official organizations—when "civil" equals 0, the coefficient of 4.048 for "international" means more international connections significantly promote their actions to influence policies. For civil organizations—when "civil" equals 1, the combined coefficient of

“international” with the interaction term becomes 0.482. It shows that international connections are still positively associated with civil organizations’ actions to influence policies, albeit to a lesser degree than official organizations. It may be an unexpected finding at first glance. However, considering many GONGOs’ conservative tendency to influence policies, their more significant changes than civil organizations caused by international support may not be a surprise. In her studies on environmental GONGOs, Wu (2002, 2003) finds that some GONGOs built extensive international connections from the outset because part of the state’s purpose in establishing the GONGOs was obtaining international assistance and expertise. Because they benefited from international support, these GONGOs’ autonomy and capacity grew, promoting their roles in national and local environmental policymaking (Wu 2002, 48). In addition, she finds that GONGOs with access to international resources and the means and motivation to strengthen their autonomy and capacity have become more supportive of forming a green civil society in China than GONGOs with less autonomy from the government (Wu 2002, 46). The statistical evidence provided by this chapter supports these findings.

Model 1 in Table 9.7 shows that influencing policy outcomes requires more resources than taking action or simply building the motivation to influence policies. In addition to formalization, professionalization, and connections with international entities, organizational size and relationships with constituencies become significantly positive factors associated with the effectiveness of policy influence. These two factors are insignificant in models related to the willingness and actions to influence policies. This finding explains why the effectiveness of influencing policies is more difficult to achieve, as shown in Figure 9.1. Larger organizations with closer connections with their constituencies have better opportunities to make their policy-related actions fruitful, other factors being equal. Representing the interests of constituencies is a critical

part of achieving policy goals. As Zhang and Guo (2021a, 220) put it, to advocate effectively signifies representing constituents vigorously in the policy process. These results partially support hypotheses 1a and 1d because those hypotheses are only valid for the effectiveness of influencing policies. Zhang and Guo's (2012) empirical study identifies that constituent engagement does not affect organizations' policy-related investment. On the one hand, it is consistent with the finding of this research that connections with constituents have no significant impact on organizations' policy actions. On the other hand, they would probably draw a different conclusion if they had added the effectiveness of policy influence as another dependent variable. The multi-dimensional definition of policy influence applied in this research leads to a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of organizations' policy influence.

Hypothesis 1c is not verified because the variable "organizations" is not statistically significant in any model. It is widely recognized that inter-organizational collaborations foster policy influence, and many studies in various settings have provided positive evidence. Previous chapters in this research also discover a few organizational coalitions that actively influence policies, especially in health and environmental fields. However, the results of this chapter show that this factor becomes insignificant when a broader range of organizations is taken into account. Building coalitions, after all, has not become a popular approach for many Chinese social organizations to influence policies. As Su et al. (2022, 907) note, the horizontal social self-organization is still underdeveloped as mobilization with the masses is strictly prohibited. Nevertheless, the insignificant result does not reverse conclusions in the existing literature by arguing that peer collaborations are detrimental to organizations' policy influence. If Chinese social organizations invested more in peer collaborations, future research results would change.

In sum, empirical evidence supports or partially supports four hypotheses under the resource mobilization theme. Only hypothesis 1c under this theme is not verified by any regression models, although the results do not point in the opposite direction. Statistical analyses provide strong evidence for the validity of resource mobilization theory.

9.4.3.2 The Finding Related to Resource Dependence Theory

As these three tables demonstrate, the variable “official funding” is not statistically significant in any models, meaning it is not a good predictor of policy influence. As a result, hypothesis 2 is not verified. Government funding does not significantly hinder Chinese social organizations’ willingness, actions, and effectiveness in influencing policies. However, the evidence neither supports the opposite view. Government funding does not promote organizations’ willingness, actions, and effectiveness to influence policies. Unlike many extant studies on the same issue in China, this chapter draws a similar conclusion to that of the eclectic body of research mentioned before, i.e., government funding is more likely to play a neutral role. The finding of He’s (2023) study of Chinese environmental organizations is the same. Overall, the evidence of this analysis fails to support resource dependence theory.

However, it must be pointed out that this finding is based on the fact that government funding was generally at a low level at the time of the survey, as shown in Table 9.2. As government funding for Chinese social organizations has dramatically increased in recent years, its effect on organizations’ policy influence may change.

9.4.3.3 Findings Related to Institutional Theory

The evidence of this analysis at least partially verifies institutional theory. The variable “government relation” is statistically significant and positively associated with policy influence in all selected models. Closer relationships with the government facilitate organizations’ influence

on policies. As a result, hypothesis 3c is supported. This finding is in line with the conclusion of the existing literature.

However, the effects of “government relation” also have some nuances. The interaction term “civil·government relation” is statistically significant in the two selected models in Table 9.5 and Table 9.6, indicating that the effects of “government relation” on willingness and actions to influence policies in civil and official organizations are different.

In Table 9.5, the coefficient of 1.608 for “government relation”—when “civil” equals 0—means that official organization’s closer government relationships enhance their willingness to influence policies. It is consistent with the differences among active state corporatism, passive state corporatism, and symbolic state corporatism identified in the analytical framework in this research. Nevertheless, for civil organizations—when “civil” equals 1, the combined coefficient of “government relation” with the interaction term becomes -0.225. The negative sign shows that government relations are negatively associated with civil organizations’ willingness to influence policies. In other words, civil organizations with closer relationships with the government are less willing to influence policies, or civil organizations farther away from the government are more willing to influence policies. It contradicts the characteristics of embedded pluralism. The discrepancy lies in the existence of critical pluralism and silent pluralism. Critical pluralism still enjoyed some social space at the time of the survey. Organizations adopting critical pluralism tend to claim looser connections with the state than organizations adopting embedded pluralism. However, the former group also has a solid willingness to influence policies. Furthermore, as previous chapters reveal, some organizations in the category of silent pluralism show sympathy to their constituencies and are willing to influence policies to some extent, even though they usually claim further relationships with the state. These two categories of organizations overshadow

organizations adopting embedded pluralism and pull the combined coefficient of “government relation” in the negative direction.

In Table 9.6, the coefficient of 4.294 for “government relation”—when “civil” equals 0—displays the significant tendency of official organizations with closer government relationships to take policy actions. For civil organizations—when “civil” equals 1, the combined coefficient of “government relation” with the interaction term becomes 0.837, which means government relations are also positively associated with civil organizations’ actions to influence policies, though to a lesser degree. The characteristics of silent pluralist organizations may explain this change in the coefficient’s direction. These organizations usually limit themselves to the level of willingness to influence policies. That is, they do not take practical actions to influence policies, let alone influence policies effectively. Consequently, the effect of pulling the coefficient in the negative direction is reversed when the policy actions and effectiveness issues are tackled. Furthermore, the positive effects of government relations on actions and effectiveness in influencing policies signify that embedded pluralism is more popular than critical pluralism when a broad range of organizations is considered. According to Buffardi et al. (2017, 1231), a preference for less confrontational tactics among most nonprofits has been discovered by various studies in the U.S., Israel, Australia, Singapore, and the Dutch-speaking region of Belgium. The similar preferences of many Chinese social organizations do not seem unique. Su et al. (2022) find that more autonomous organizations tend to conduct direct negotiations with the government more actively, while they are likely to be more hesitant to mobilize society from the bottom up. Chapters Two to Eight of this research also show that embedded pluralism exists in all seven fields, while critical pluralism appeared in five fields, with only one case in the fields of migrant workers and disabled persons, respectively.

The analyses above demonstrate again that the multi-dimensional definition of policy influence applied in this research provides a comprehensive picture of the effects of government relations and an accurate understanding of the characteristics of different modes of policy influence.

Personal connections with government officials are seen as a crucial part of good government relations. Hypothesis 3d assumes a positive association between organizations' policy influence and their personal connections with the government. Other researchers' empirical studies draw mixed conclusions, i.e., these two variables are either positively associated or have no relationship. On the contrary, this chapter draws a different conclusion for the first time. As the coefficients of "official persons" indicate, organizations possessing more employees with official backgrounds are less active in taking policy actions and have less influence on policy outcomes, even though their willingness to influence policies is not significantly lower. Therefore, hypothesis 3d is not supported. This finding seems to contradict not only some existing studies but also a few case studies in previous chapters of this research. The distinction lies in different measurements of personal connections. Most existing studies and previous chapters of this research focus on major organizational leaders' personal backgrounds and connections. In contrast, this chapter measures personal connections by the number of employees who have official backgrounds. Concentrating on a few organizational leaders, the existing literature neglects the disadvantage of employing more people with official backgrounds. Many persons with official backgrounds are usually used to bureaucratic working styles and cautious in representing the interests of organizational constituencies, which lowers organizational capacities to take policy actions and influence policy outcomes, although they may not object to the idea of influencing policies. As the number of employees with official backgrounds increases inside an organization, the disadvantage of capacity loss for the entire organization will outweigh the advantage of a few organizational leaders'

personal connections with the government. Zhan and Tang's (2016, 591, 596-597) concern that good *guanxi* with the government is a double-edged sword is reasonable. Although the overall good relationship with the state strengthens an organization's policy influence, this good relationship is not embodied in the number of persons with official backgrounds in the organization. This is why both "government relation" and "official persons" are significant in the same models with opposite directions of effects on actions and effectiveness to influence policies.

Another finding related to institutional theory is that "MOCA registration" is insignificant across all models. Therefore, hypothesis 3a is not supported. This result is consistent with the findings of existing empirical studies (Zhan and Tang, 2016; Li et al., 2016). Admittedly, official registration status will bring social organizations certain benefits. However, no empirical studies have verified the theoretical inference that these benefits promote organizations' policy influence. On the one hand, these benefits may not necessarily be translated into policy influence as registered organizations may be more circumscribed in their service and policy activities (Zhan and Tang 2016, 593). On the other hand, as mentioned above, many organizations strategize to circumvent the registration obstacle by seeking other operational forms. These organizations without MOCA registration are as motivated and active in influencing policies as those with the registration. In addition, they are not less effective than the latter in achieving policy outcomes. Although official registration status benefits organizations in multiple aspects, it is not a necessary condition to influence policies.

This chapter also finds that organizations' origins impact their policy influence. However, the direction is on the opposite side of hypothesis 3b. The coefficients of "civil" are significant and positive in selected models in Table 9.5 and Table 9.6, meaning civil organizations are more inclined to influence policies and take actions in practice than official organizations. Enormous

odds ratios indicate this tendency is strong. However, when it comes to effectiveness in influencing policies, “civil” is no longer significant, meaning there is no difference between civil and official organizations in achieving policy goals. Hypothesis 3b assumes that top-down organizations have more policy influence than bottom-up organizations. It is not supported by statistical evidence in this chapter. Chapter Two uncovers that bottom-up women’s organizations are no less active than top-down women’s organizations in influencing policies when the dimensions of willingness and actions are considered, although they may be less effective in influencing policy outcomes than the latter. This finding holds in most fields investigated in this research. Because this survey did not include mass organizations, the difference in effectiveness between these two groups of organizations may disappear in this sample. Findings based on anecdotal data and statistical data are basically congruent with each other.

Overall, only hypothesis 3c is supported under the theme of institutional theory. However, as introduced above, subsequent developments of the theory have incorporated the idea of contests over legitimacy, norms, and values, and the possibility of changing the normative order through strategic actions and interactions. In response to institutional pressures, organizations have the possibility to strategically shape their environments and obtain support from their environments. This research finds that the institutional environment, specified as the Chinese state’s power, shapes organizations’ policy influence. Organizations must conform to the rules, norms, and values emanating from the government. In practice, they must maintain good relationships with the government to influence policies. Nevertheless, bottom-up organizations have acted strategically to buffer institutional pressures and circumvent some institutional barriers, making themselves no less active than top-down organizations in influencing policies, although they still need to be more influential in achieving policy goals. As He (2023, 882) unveils, government interventions do not

restrain environmental NGOs from advocating; instead, they can find flexible strategies to have their voices heard, expand their activity space, and mitigate the influence of government interventions. In this sense, the empirical evidence of this chapter supports both the early versions of institutional theory and its subsequent developments.

9.4.3.4 Control Variables

Regarding control variables, “age” is significant and positive in selected models in Table 9.5 and Table 9.6, meaning older organizations are more willing to influence policies and are inclined to take policy actions in practice than younger organizations. It is consistent with Guo’s (2023, 725) finding. Organizations benefit from the accumulation of resources, reputation, and experience. However, this variable becomes insignificant in Table 9.7, demonstrating that the advantage of age will disappear when it comes to the effectiveness of influencing policies. This result again shows the difficulty of achieving policy goals in the context of China. According to the discussion before, the findings regarding “age” also partially support resource mobilization theory.

The variable “environmental” is not significant across all models, showing that the overall policy influence of environmental organizations is not significantly higher than that of other fields of organizations. The result is consistent with that of the exploratory bivariate tests. Zhang (2018) investigates the policy influence of organizations operating in five categories. He also finds that the policy influence of the category containing environmental organizations is not significantly higher than that of other categories. Although the policy activities and achievements of some prominent environmental organizations have drawn much attention from researchers and practitioners, the systematic scan of this study shows that all six modes of policy (non)influence exist in the field of environment. Many environmental organizations, including both top-down and

bottom-up organizations, are less active or inactive actors in the policy arena. Therefore, it is reasonable to find that the panoramic picture of their policy influence is less promising than expected.

9.5 Practical Implications

Although this chapter is theory-oriented, some results have practical implications for practitioners operating social organizations in China, especially for those working in bottom-up or international organizations.

As this research discloses, both organizational capacity and organizational relationship with the state impact the organization's policy influence. In addition to mobilizing material resources, such as financial and human resources, organizational management is crucial to capacity building. Organizations need to underscore formalization and professionalization as the fundamental components of organizational management to influence policies. If establishing a board of directors or conducting project and organizational evaluations is still beyond the scope of capabilities, forming a written constitution, detailed work plans, and work reviews may be a good starting point. To construct a public relations structure, in addition to a development plan, utilizing various forms of self-media is a low-cost entry. Organizations may consider recruiting more professionals as volunteers or part-time staff members to save costs.

Maintaining close relationships with constituencies is critical for achieving policy goals. Organizations need to network with members, volunteers, and other sympathetic people across the country to build stable and valid communication channels through personal connections and various online platforms. Organizations can use these channels to collect and articulate their opinions daily and find policy-related issues accordingly. Since offline mass mobilizations are too

risky in China, organizations may launch online mobilizations and amplify their voices through mass media.

Peer collaborations have developed unevenly in different policy areas. Organizations in the same field must stop destructive behaviors in resource competitions and seek common ground while reserving differences. Before collaborating in policy activities, organizations may start by cooperating to provide services. This research finds that a hub organization may be critical to network maintenance and operation. Those large organizations with more resources should assume the responsibility of organizing and maintaining networks and promoting peer collaborations within or beyond networks.

Building connections with international entities is also critical for organizations' policy influence. Domestic organizations must establish and maintain connections with international organizations that are still operating in China. Provided that the government tries to cut funding streams from foreign entities, domestic organizations may focus on seeking information, expertise, and ideas from international organizations, including the knowledge and methods of influencing policies. In response to their needs, international organizations need to launch more training sessions and cooperative activities to build domestic organizations' capacities. The content regarding influencing policies could merge into the general capacity building or service programs to lower potential risks. Because official organizations with international support could make more significant changes in influencing policies than bottom-up organizations, international entities must cooperate with GONGOs and try to influence their norms, values, and working methods.

Given the repressive nature of the Chinese government, organizations operating in this country cannot challenge the regime's fundamental rules. Instead, they must follow official rules

to survive. However, they can take advantage of the institutional environment through strategic actions and interactions.

Maintaining a relatively good relationship with the government is a critical condition for influencing policies. It does not mean the organization should sacrifice its independence and agenda. On the contrary, the organization may extend its policy agenda by interacting with the government, albeit in an acceptable way for the latter. If the environment allows, the organization may even criticize the government and its policies as long as it does not challenge the political regime. Accepting government funding is not a formidable hindrance to organizational autonomy. With shrinking international funding, official funding becomes a valuable alternative for many organizations. However, the organization must pay attention to the conditions of these funds to ensure that they do not conflict with organizational cause and agenda.

Organizational leaders' personal connections with government officials could foster the organization's policy efforts. However, leaders of the organization need to realize that personal connection is a double-edged sword that may constrain the organization's policy engagement. In addition to choosing pro-reform and open-minded officials, organizational leaders must ensure that these personal connections serve organizational objectives instead of hampering them. Furthermore, an organization needs to avoid employing many staff members with official backgrounds because this structure of human resources will significantly reduce organizational capacities to launch policy actions and achieve policy goals.

Many bottom-up organizations seek to register with the MOCA system to acquire corresponding benefits. This pursuit is not an obstacle to organizations' policy influence. Nevertheless, it is neither a precondition for organizations' policy efforts. If official registration status is too challenging, organizations can choose other operational forms and serve as active

policy advocates. Organizations that have obtained official registration statuses need to learn how to translate extra resources into policy actions and achievements.

9.6 Conclusion

This chapter provides empirical evidence to test some findings in previous chapters regarding the factors shaping the policy influence of social organizations in China. The data come from surveys of national-level social organizations in Beijing conducted by the author between 2010 and 2012. Joining the research endeavor in the existing body of literature, this chapter tests three leading theories—resource mobilization theory, resource dependence theory, and institutional theory. Those factors are grouped according to these theoretical perspectives, and three groups of relevant hypotheses are developed.

Univariate analyses show that the sample organizations are active policy advocates on average, although successfully influencing policy outcomes is more challenging for them. In addition, most of them maintain some relationships with critical external actors. However, gaining access to the government and international entities is relatively more difficult than constituencies and other organizations.

Bivariate tests demonstrate that the three dimensions of policy influence are moderately and positively associated with each other. On the one hand, organizational willingness to influence policies may lead to policy actions and effectiveness, as found in previous chapters. On the other hand, one dimension of policy influence cannot replace the other two dimensions. A unique contribution of this research is to test three theories by juxtaposing and comparing three dimensions of policy influence. In addition, exploratory bivariate analyses find that no one organizational field significantly has more policy influence than other fields.

The results of multiple regression analyses support or partially support some hypotheses while invalidating others. The specific findings are listed below.

Findings Related to Resource Mobilization Theory

Hypothesis 1a, assuming that organizational size is positively associated with organizations' policy influence, is partially supported because the variable "size" is only significant and positively associated with the effectiveness of policy influence.

Hypothesis 1b, assuming that the level of organizational formalization and professionalization is positively associated with organizations' policy influence, is supported because the variable "formalization" is significant and positively associated with the willingness, actions, and effectiveness of policy influence.

Hypothesis 1c, assuming that connections with other domestic social organizations foster organizations' policy influence, is not verified because the variable "organizations" is insignificant in all models.

Hypothesis 1d, assuming that connections with organizational constituencies are positively associated with organizations' policy influence, is partially supported because the variable "constituencies" is only significant and positively associated with the effectiveness of policy influence. Influencing policy outcomes requires more resources than taking action or simply building the motivation to influence policies.

Hypothesis 1e, assuming that connections with international entities are positively associated with organizations' policy influence, is supported because the variable "international" is significant and positively associated with the willingness, actions, and effectiveness of policy influence. Furthermore, considering the impact of the interaction term "civil-international," it is

found that the positive effect of international connections on policy actions is to a lesser degree in civil organizations than in official organizations.

The Finding Related to Resource Dependence Theory

Hypothesis 2, assuming that official funding in organizations' revenues is negatively associated with organizations' policy influence, is not verified because the variable "official funding" is insignificant across all models.

Findings Related to Institutional Theory

Hypothesis 3a, assuming that official registration status fosters organizations' policy influence, is not verified because the variable "MOCA registration" is insignificant across all models.

Hypothesis 3b, assuming that top-down organizations have more policy influence than bottom-up organizations, is not verified because the variable "civil" is significant and positively associated with the willingness and actions of policy influence, while it has an insignificant effect on the effectiveness of policy influence. Civil organizations are more inclined to influence policies and take action in practice than official organizations, although they are not more influential in achieving policy goals.

Hypothesis 3c, assuming that close relationships with the government are positively associated with organizations' policy influence, is supported because the variable "government relation" is significant and positively associated with the willingness, actions, and effectiveness of policy influence. However, considering the impacts of the interaction term "civil-government relation," the effects of "government relation" have nuances. Close government relations are positively associated with official organizations' willingness to influence policies but negatively

associated with civil organizations' willingness to influence policies. In addition, the positive effect of government relations on actions to influence policies is to a lesser degree in civil organizations than in official organizations. The discrepancies lie in different characteristics of silent pluralism, critical pluralism, and embedded pluralism. Furthermore, the results indicate that embedded pluralism is more popular than critical pluralism when a broad range of organizations are taken into consideration.

Hypothesis 3d, assuming that personal connections with government officials are positively associated with organizations' policy influence, is not verified because the variable "official persons" is significant and negatively associated with the actions and effectiveness of policy influence, while it has an insignificant effect on the willingness of policy influence. Employing many staff members with official backgrounds lowers organizational capacities to take policy actions and influence policy outcomes. Good government relationships are not embodied in the organization's number of persons with official backgrounds.

Regarding control variables, the variable "age" is significant and positively associated with the willingness and actions of policy influence, while it has an insignificant effect on the effectiveness of policy influence. Older organizations are more willing to influence policies and are inclined to take policy actions in practice than younger organizations, although they are not more influential in achieving policy goals. The variable "environmental" is insignificant across all models, indicating that the policy influence of environmental organizations is not significantly higher than that of organizations in other fields.

Overall, the empirical evidence strongly supports resource mobilization theory and does not verify resource dependence theory. Considering both the early versions of institutional theory and its subsequent developments, this chapter supports the arguments of institutional theory.

This chapter verifies a major finding of previous chapters that organizational capacity and relationship with the state impact the organization's policy influence. Those factors under the theme of resource mobilization theory demonstrate critical components of capacities the organization needs to build to influence policies. In a similar vein, the factors under the themes of resource dependence theory and institutional theory reflect various aspects of the government relationship the organization needs to handle. In addition to conforming to institutional rules, the organization can act strategically to buffer institutional pressures and shape its environment. Many Chinese social organizations have made significant progress over the last few decades. Accumulating more resources and experience, they may play a more critical role in the policy arena in the future.

Chapter 10 CONCLUSION

This research joins the endeavor to investigate the policy influence of social organizations in China. Following the academic tradition of this issue, this research has discovered many cases of organizations' policy actions, studied social organizations' strategies in influencing policies, and explored organizational and contextual factors shaping organizations' policy influence. Combining deductive and inductive methods, this research develops the analytical framework after investigating the women's and health fields and tests it in five other fields—migrant workers, disability, minors, seniors, and the environment. This framework is sufficiently valid because no organizations operate outside the six modes of policy influence defined in the framework: active state corporatism, passive state corporatism, symbolic state corporatism, embedded pluralism, critical pluralism, and silent pluralism. Using survey data collected by the author, this research has also tested three leading theories—resource mobilization theory, institutional theory, and resource dependence theory. The empirical evidence supports the former two but fails to verify the latter. Overall, this research inherits the academic traditions of both state-society relations and organizational policy influence and enriches the understanding of Chinese social organizations' policy influence.

This chapter further discusses the findings of previous chapters and concludes the research with three themes—the formation of modes of policy influence, the government's attitudes toward social organizations, and the major contributions of this research to the existing literature. In addition, this chapter specifies the limitations of this research. Finally, it discusses the implications of this research for China's political development.

10.1 The Formation of Modes of Policy Influence

10.1.1 Top-down Organizations

A significant finding in this research is that the policy influence modes of top-down organizations stem from the exterior source—state authorization and empowerment. In contemporary China, most mass organizations receive state authorization and empowerment and fall into the category of active state corporatism. These organizations have a relatively long history and are more likely to exist in conventional fields, such as women, minors, and disability. As discussed in Chapter Six, the seniors' field is an exceptional field, from which mass organizations are absent. Although migrant workers formed a new underprivileged group in the reform era, the ACFTU has conventionally represented urban workers since the founding of the CCP. The historical origins of these mass organizations determine their status as social pillars of state power and active roles in the policy process. Quasi-mass organizations without historical bonds with the Party-state do not enjoy this status and fall into the category of passive state corporatism by focusing on implementing policies. The CNCCC in the minors' field is a typical example.

However, not all mass organizations are active policy advocates. If a mass organization is not assigned certain constituencies and is only granted the function of implementing policies instead of participating in the whole policy process, it will focus on this function and fall into the category of passive state corporatism. The RCSC is such an example. Even one organization might go through different modes of policy influence in different stages, depending on state authorization and empowerment. For example, the ACFTU gradually incorporated migrant workers into its constituencies and evolved along the line of symbolic state corporatism, passive state corporatism, and active state corporatism. Furthermore, mass organizations only embrace active state corporatism within their assigned jurisdictions. When they work in other jurisdictions, they behave passively by focusing on policy implementation. The ACWF, the ACFTU, the CCYL, the CFPA,

and the ACFIC participate in combating HIV/AIDS. However, all of them focus on implementing policies rather than influencing policymaking. In addition, the representative function of active state corporatist organizations has common limitations. They inherently cannot represent all the demands of all their constituencies, especially those conflicting with the state's interests or social and cultural context. Sometimes, it is difficult for them to find the actual demands of their constituencies because of their bureaucratic working style and overlong administrative chains. Some organizations' limitations are more severe than those of others. For instance, the CCYL suffers from extra limitations stemming from its politicized nature, such as inadequate long-term intentions and plans, relatively weak institutions, and insufficient resources.

Policy influence modes of organizations affiliated with government agencies or top-down organizations depend on direct authorization and empowerment of their supervisory bodies. Because the state controls these supervisory bodies, it indirectly authorizes policy influence modes of their affiliated organizations.

Organizations affiliated with government agencies tend to fall into the categories of passive state corporatism or symbolic state corporatism. Excluding the environmental field, no organizations affiliated with government agencies play active roles in the policy process. Most organizations affiliated with government agencies agree with the criteria of passive state corporatism, even in the field of environment. Mass organizations are absent from two unconventional fields—health and environment—and one conventional field—the seniors' field. Therefore, government agencies dominate policymaking in these three fields. Consequently, most organizations affiliated with these agencies exist in the categories of passive state corporatism or symbolic state corporatism.

Government agencies assuming major responsibilities in a field tend to authorize their affiliated organizations to play more substantial policy roles because they need more policy assistants. In the environmental field, the MEP empowered the ACEF and the CEC, and the SFA empowered the CSF to actively participate in the policy process. It relates somewhat to the central leadership's accentuation of environmental protection and ecological civilization construction. However, their capacity and effectiveness in influencing policies are not comparable with those of mass organizations, even though their bureaucratic working style is lesser, and their administrative chains are shorter. Although agencies assuming major responsibilities in other fields do not go this far, they authorize affiliated organizations as major policy implementation entities in their jurisdictions. In the health field, the MOH authorizes five affiliated organizations to implement policies combating HIV/AIDS and hepatitis. In the seniors' field, eleven organizations affiliated with the NWCAO/the MOCA or the MOH facilitate policy implementation in different aspects. The MOH started to strengthen three affiliated organizations after it became the leading agency in the field of seniors in 2018. In the minors' field, the MOCA and the MOE assume major administrative responsibilities and authorize a few affiliated organizations to implement relevant policies. Even in the environmental field, multiple agencies in charge of environment-related affairs, including the MEP and the SFA, authorize 24 affiliated organizations to implement various environmental policies. The only exceptional case is the CNCA in the seniors' field, which is integrated with the NWCAO and merely plays a symbolic role.

In contrast, government agencies not assuming major responsibilities in a field are inclined to leave affiliated organizations in the field in the category of symbolic state corporatism. For example, in the seniors' field, the General Administration of Sport, the Ministry of Culture, the MOJ, and the MOE do not assume major administrative responsibilities. Therefore, they do not

assign policy roles to their affiliated organizations in the field, including implementing seniors-related policies. As a result, these organizations can only play symbolic roles. For another example, in the women's field, supervisory bodies of six other top-down women's organizations include the MOH, the Ministry of Culture, the National Religious Affairs Administration, the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission (SASAC), the Supreme People's Procuratorate, and the Supreme People's Court. None of these agencies assumes major responsibilities in the women's field. Consequently, those women's organizations affiliated with them only perform symbolic functions.

Social organizations affiliated with top-down organizations may be assigned any policy role. Like government agencies, active state corporatist organizations usually authorize their affiliated organizations to play more substantial policy roles because they also need more policy assistants. In the women's field, the ACWF empowers five affiliated organizations and one official think tank, and the CASS empowers two official think tanks to actively participate in the policy process. In the minors' field, the ACWF and the CCYL authorize four affiliated organizations to be active policy advocates, making them a part of their active state corporatism. Since 2011, the CNCC has moved from passive state corporatism to active state corporatism thanks to the empowerment of the ACWF and the CFES. In addition to these active policy assistants, active state corporatist organizations need passive aides who serve as important policy implementation entities. In the women's field, three organizations affiliated with the ACWF play these roles. In the field of disability, 12 social organizations and five special associations act as the CDPF's arms to implement policies in their respective jurisdictions. In the minors' field, the CCYL and the ACWF created four organizations, including the well-known CYDF, to facilitate the implementation of minors-related policies. An exceptional case is the All-China Women and Children Development

Association affiliated with the ACWF. It has been marginalized into the category of symbolic state corporatism and remained dormant since 2015.

Passive state corporatist organizations do not have the authority and the capacity to authorize their affiliated organizations to act as active policy advocates. Therefore, organizations affiliated with these organizations can hardly become active state corporatist organizations. For example, the CNCCC is a passive state corporatist organization, and two affiliated organizations fall into the same category. In a similar vein, organizations affiliated with symbolic state corporatist organizations play symbolic roles. For instance, the China Association of Mayors is a symbolic state corporatist organization focusing on domestic and international communication. Its Division of Women Mayors also falls into the same category.

In fact, supervisory bodies of organizations in the category of symbolic state corporatism determine their status. Government agencies not assuming major responsibilities in a field are inclined to make affiliated organizations in the field symbolic. Likewise, top-down organizations not playing essential roles in a field tend to make affiliated organizations in the field symbolic. In the women's field, supervisory bodies of ten other top-down women's organizations include the Chinese Talents Society, the China Association of City Planning, the China Federation of Literary and Art Circles, the CAST, the ACLA, the ACFIC, the China Association of Mayors, the China Tourism Association, Western Returned Scholars Association, and the China Society for Promoting Construction in Former Revolutionary Base Areas. Regardless of their modes of policy influence, none of these supervisory bodies plays an essential role in the women's field. They neither have the authority to authorize their affiliated organizations to participate in the whole policy process in the women's field nor need to treat these organizations as important policy implementation entities in the field. Without supervisory bodies' empowerment, these women's

organizations only play symbolic roles. The seniors' field has similar cases. The China Railway Corporation and the CAST do not play essential roles in this field. Consequently, their respective affiliated organizations, the Chinese Railway Veterans Association and the CASST, fall into the category of symbolic state corporatism.

When supervisory bodies do not have policy functions at all, their affiliated organizations can hardly play more than symbolic roles. In the environmental field, although the CAST is the common de jure sponsoring unit for the nine top-down organizations in the category of symbolic state corporatism, various education/research institutions serve as their de facto supervisory bodies. Focusing on academic and technological issues, these education/research institutions do not have policy functions. They neither have the power to participate in the whole policy process nor serve as major policy implementation entities in their specific areas. Therefore, their policy inertia transmits to these nine organizations. In contrast, the CBCGDF could grow out of symbolic state corporatism because it does not have such de facto supervisory bodies. In the women's field, women's studies centers reside in universities. These supervisory bodies engage in teaching and research. They are not important policy implementation entities and cannot participate in the whole policy process. Women's studies centers receive essential resources from them and connect with them tightly. As a result, they only play symbolic roles. The Center for Women's Law Studies and Legal Services of Peking University was a bottom-up organization. It had independent sources of resources and was not tightly connected with Peking University. It was fundamentally different from these women's studies centers. The CLAPV and Shanshui in the field of environment have similar features.

In addition to the above objective causes, organizational leadership is the subjective cause for modes of policy influence. For top-down social organizations, high-profile and proactive

leaders strived for the authorization and empowerment of the state or supervisory bodies. In the field of disability, the CDPF obtained mass organization status from the outset because of Deng Pufang's political influence. In the women's field, Jiang Chunyun strengthened the CFPA's policy functions. It is more evident in the field of environment. From the beginning, the ACEF and the CEC possess high-level leaders who have initiated and sustained their active policy roles. Jiang Zehui promoted the CSF's policy functions and led it into active state corporatism. Hu Deping significantly switched the CBCGDF from symbolic state corporatism to passive state corporatism. After new executive officers, such as Zhou Jinfeng, Lü Keqin, and Ma Yong, joined the organization, it has increasingly shown characteristics of active state corporatism in recent years. The CECPA displayed some characteristics of active state corporatism during a certain period, thanks to Pan Yue's appointment as its president. As Pan Yue abruptly alienated himself from the organization, it lost these characteristics. However, high-profile and proactive leaders appeared in exceptional cases. Objective causes typically determine the formation of these policy influence modes.

10.1.2 Bottom-up Organizations

As found in Chapter Nine, embedded pluralism is more popular than critical pluralism, consistent with the global trend of embracing less confrontational approaches. Chapters two to eight also show that embedded pluralism exists in all seven fields. In comparison, critical pluralism appeared in five fields with only one case found in the fields of migrant workers and disabled persons, respectively. In addition, the presence of silent pluralism in all seven fields indicates that maintaining silence in the policy arena is ubiquitous in bottom-up social organizations.

Organizational leadership is also a subjective cause for modes of policy influence adopted by bottom-up organizations. Beijing Huiling's unique non-collaborative strategies in the field of

disability were attributed to Meng Weina's personal choice to a large extent. In the women's field, Lü Pin served as a critical social entrepreneur in developing a new force in the Chinese women's movement. In the health field, Ye Haiyan decided the policy influence mode of the CWRW. In the field of migrant workers, Huang Leping's guideline of concurrently emphasizing rights protection and stability maintenance directs Yilian's adoption of embedded pluralism. Similarly, Tong Lihua's close relationships with the government and multiple top-down organizations shape the policy influence mode of Zhicheng and the BCLARC. The GEI led by Jin Jiaman is a similar case in the field of environment. In this field, Liang Xiaoyan intentionally directed Brooks to avoid policy issues, and Liao Xiaoyi switched the GVB's trajectory and reduced its policy activities in recent years according to her own philosophy. Compared with leaders of top-down organizations, leaders of bottom-up organizations have more free space to direct their organizations. Therefore, organizational leadership plays a more significant role in shaping policy influence modes of bottom-up organizations. However, objective causes still typically determine the formation of policy influence modes of these organizations and function together with the subjective cause.

Informal organizations, especially internet websites, usually fall into the category of silent pluralism. Although several websites, such as www.hbvhbv.com and www.jianjiaobuluo.com, served as platforms for mobilizing constituencies to influence policies, they failed to break silent pluralism. A few informal organizations, e.g., the GAD, the Media Monitor for Women Network, Echoing Steppe, and Friends of Prairie, grew out of silent pluralism after developing formal structures and procedures. Students' organizations are generally inactive in the policy arena. Several exceptional ones were involved in policy actions under the influence of external driving forces. Once external driving forces disappeared, they fell back silent on policy issues. Community organizations generally maintain silence, albeit they may be sympathetic to their constituents and

willing to influence relevant policies. In addition to these relatively weak organizations, formal national-level organizations are present in the category of silent pluralism. Some embraced this mode from the outset, while others switched from other modes of policy influence. Although silent pluralism exists in all seven fields, it is relatively more popular in the fields of minors and seniors.

Previous chapters verify that organizational capacity, including the relationship with the state, and willingness to influence policies affect an organization's policy engagement. Most organizations in the category of silent pluralism have inadequate organizational capacities, including access to policymakers. In addition, many of these organizations have ceased working. Limited organizational capacity negatively impacts not only the mode of policy influence but also the chance of survival. Some organizations in this group lack both capacity and willingness to influence policies, while some are willing but unable to influence policies. A few organizations in the category of silent pluralism are unwilling to influence policies despite their advantageous resources and good government connections. Examples include Brooks, GreenTV, the IED, the SEE, the five organizations created by persons from the health system, ITPC-China after 2015, and the BCDC/Beijing Yichuang after 2016. Cautious leaders of these organizations contribute to their silence in the policy arena. Both organizational capacity and willingness to influence policies are indispensable for an organization to move out of silent pluralism, reflecting the synergy between objective and subjective causes.

In addition to the choices of organizational leadership, the field features influence the formation of embedded pluralism and critical pluralism. In conventional fields, such as women, disability, minors, and seniors, embedded pluralism is the mainstream mode of policy influence. A cluster of reduced embedded pluralism, a subcategory of embedded pluralism, exists in the field of disability. Beijing Huiling was the sole case that adopted critical pluralism in this field. In the

fields of minors and seniors, critical pluralism is absent. Critical pluralism emerged in the women's field but was cracked down by the state before it grew into another mainstream mode. As a result, embedded pluralism dominates the women's field again. In contrast, clusters of critical pluralism emerged in the fields of health and environment, two unconventional fields. An exceptional website, www.ilabour.org, embraced critical pluralism in the field of migrant workers, another unconventional field. As discussed later in this chapter, it was probably one of many labor organizations adopting critical pluralism. This research did not identify those organizations because of geographical limitations. Although there is no clear-cut boundary, critical pluralism seems more likely to appear in unconventional fields than conventional ones. In unconventional fields, social contradictions that emerged in the reform era are more acute than those chronic problems in conventional fields. Some issues in these fields, such as the HIV/AIDS pandemic and environmental disasters, have often become social emergencies. On the one hand, some organizations in these fields took a critical attitude toward the state and employed more aggressive approaches to draw social attention and pressure policymakers. On the other hand, the state is more likely to prioritize these issue areas and tolerate critical pluralism. In contrast, in the absence of such acute contradictions and urgent crises, conventional fields give rise to more cooperative social organizations that prefer less confrontational and risky approaches.

A related reason for the formation of these two modes of policy influence is whether mass organizations exist. In the three conventional fields of women, minors, and disability, the ACWF, the CCYL, and the CDPF actively influence relevant policies and represent the interests of their constituencies. Although they have limitations, they serve as bridges connecting the government with the grassroots, including many bottom-up organizations. Provided these channels into the official system, organizations in these fields are inclined to use collaborative strategies to influence

policies. In the field of migrant workers, even though many organizations in another geographical area might have embraced critical pluralism, most organizations in Beijing adopt embedded pluralism. It is related to the intermediary role of the ACFTU. In contrast, mass organizations are absent from the fields of health and environment. Two clusters of critical pluralism emerged in these two fields. The reason partly lies in inadequate intermediary roles played by mass organizations. Although the three active state corporatist organizations in the environmental field, especially the ACEF, also endeavor to represent their constituencies, their capacity and effectiveness are not comparable with those of mass organizations.

Another impetus for critical pluralism came from international resources. This research finds that international entities have contributed not only funds but also ideas, approaches, and norms, including the knowledge and methods of influencing policies, to Chinese social organizations. International women's, LGBTQ, HIV/AIDS, labor, and environmental movements have affected many domestic organizations in the fields of women, health, labor, and environment (Wu and Nie 2021, 177-178). Some Chinese organizations cooperated with international organizations to launch policy actions. Although international resources might not directly give rise to critical pluralism, the rights-oriented norms and diverse methods of influencing policies broadened domestic organizations' horizons and inspired their actions. Most organizations embracing critical pluralism were identified in these four fields impacted by international movements. The women's field is a conventional field, with the ACWF playing an intermediary role. However, international women's movement, including the #MeToo movement, spawned critical pluralism in this field in a certain period. In contrast, organizations in the fields of disability, minors, and seniors draw on relatively fewer international resources. Consequently, these organizations are relatively underdeveloped regarding policy influence, and critical pluralism is

hardly found in these fields. As analyzed in Chapter Six, inadequate international support is related to the underdevelopment of organizations in the seniors' field, the most underrepresented field studied in this research. Critical pluralism is undoubtedly absent from this field.

This research finds that two factors do not impact the formation of policy influence modes and the level of policy influence. One factor is the size of organizational constituencies. In the health field, the patient groups of HIV/AIDS or hemophilia are much smaller than the patient group of hepatitis in China. However, all these three groups cultivated social organizations that actively influenced policies adopting critical pluralism. In the field of disability, some organizations representing large disabled groups, such as people with visual, physical, intellectual, or psychiatric disabilities, actively influence relevant policies. The group with rare disorders is much smaller than other groups of disabled persons. Nevertheless, fewer people do not necessarily mean a lower voice. Adopting embedded pluralism, China-Dolls/Illness Challenge Foundation took many actions to influence policies. Many organizations in the fields of women and migrant workers actively represent these large groups of constituencies and influence policies. On the contrary, such organizations are scarce in the fields of minors and seniors, which is disproportionate to the vast populations of these two groups. Although Chapter Nine discloses that connections with organizational constituencies are positively associated with the effectiveness of policy influence, the size of constituencies has no impact on organizations' policy influence.

The other factor is descriptive representation. This dimension of representation occurs when a representative of an organization mirrors the characteristics of its constituents (Pitkin, 1967). In other words, organizational leaders are, in some respects, typical of the organizational constituents. The prevalence of this dimension can be indicated by the congruence between the demographic characteristics of leaders and those of constituents (Guo and Zhang 2013, 329). In

democratic settings, many studies show that descriptive representation promotes substantive representation or advocacy (Siciliano, 1996; LeRoux, 2009; Guo and Saxton, 2010). In the Chinese setting, only Guo and Zhang (2013) investigate this relationship and find a positive effect of descriptive representation on substantive representation. However, this research draws a different conclusion from studying bottom-up organizations in three fields—health, migrant workers, and disability. This research calls social organizations possessing descriptive representation group-based organizations. Because the distinction between group-based and non-group-based organizations only exists in the above three fields, the other four fields are not involved. In the health field, both group-based and non-group-based organizations appear in embedded pluralism, critical pluralism, and silent pluralism. It means that group-based organizations can either promote or discourage substantive representation and adopt different modes to influence policies. Furthermore, non-group-based organizations show the same features as group-based organizations. Therefore, organizations possessing descriptive representation do not distinguish themselves from other organizations. In the field of migrant workers, both categories of embedded pluralism and silent pluralism include social organizations created by migrants-turned activists or sympathetic elites. In the field of disability, organizations founded/led by disabled persons and those created/led by sympathetic others are present in the (sub) categories of embedded pluralism, reduced embedded pluralism, and silent pluralism.¹ It is reasonable to conclude that whether an organization is group-based is irrelevant to its mode and level of policy influence. Although descriptive representation promotes substantive representation in some cases, it may discourage it

¹ Critical pluralism is not included because only one organization adopted this mode in the fields of migrant workers and disability, respectively.

in others. Descriptive representation does not significantly affect substantive representation, comparing organizations with descriptive representation and those without it.

10.2 The Government's Attitudes Toward Social Organizations

10.2.1 Top-down Organizations

In the reform era, most mass organizations adapt to the new environment by representing their constituencies' interests and influencing policies in their jurisdictions. To sustain its rule, the state needs social organizations to articulate the interests of their constituencies and transmit their voices to the state. Therefore, it grants most mass organizations the power to participate in policymaking. After the Tiananmen Square protests, the state realized that the functions of mass organizations must be strengthened rather than weakened to control the masses. It expected these organizations to serve as ordered means of expression of interest for their assigned constituencies to avoid street protests. In line with his guideline of constructing a harmonious society under the Scientific Outlook on Development, Hu Jintao further strengthened the functions of mass organizations. Xi Jinping continued to require mass organizations to represent the interests of their constituencies. He launched a new wave of reforms of mass organizations aiming to broaden the representativeness of these organizations. These reforms had limited achievements but upheld the authority of the Party. Although mass organizations are subject to the state's tighter control, their status and functions remain unchanged.

As introduced in Chapter One, encountering various social problems, the Xi administration encourages the development of four types of social organizations—social organizations working on commerce (industrial associations and chambers of commerce), science and technology, charity and philanthropy, and urban and rural community services. The Charity Law authorizes social organizations working in five domains to obtain preferential status as “charitable organizations:”

poverty alleviation, human services, disaster relief, environmental protection, and promoting causes of science, education, culture, and health. Many top-down organizations benefited first from these favorable policies thanks to their close connections with the official system. In addition, government agencies and official organizations with assigned policy functions need affiliated organizations to provide services and facilitate the implementation of policies. Even those playing symbolic roles in the policy arena are useful to the state because they perform the functions of public communication and improving the state's image. As a result, passive state corporatist organizations and symbolic state corporatist organizations have also sustained their statuses and functions.

As the state deems top-down organizations trustworthy and needs their assistance, these organizations are impacted little in the Xi era. Instead, new policies bring opportunities to those in specific domains.

10.2.2 Bottom-up Organizations

As introduced in Chapter One, the Party-state maintains control over social organizations and selectively encourages the development of certain types of social organizations simultaneously. The Xi administration inherited this principle of utilizing and controlling social organizations and escalated to a new level in both directions. On the one hand, the Xi administration promulgated new policies with limited innovations and encouraged governments' procurement of social organizations' services. On the other hand, it exerted stricter controls over social organizations, including overseas NGOs, and carried out overt repressions of more aggressive activists and organizations. Many organizations working with socially contentious issues were repressed. This administration is generally more politically conservative and skeptical of civil society than its

predecessors were in the reform era, creating a more restrictive political environment for most bottom-up social organizations.

The Xi administration selected some bottom-up social organizations to repress. As previous chapters find, it is inclined to repress organizations adopting critical pluralism. Some organizations in this category had more conflictual relationships with the state and ceased working thanks to direct state crackdowns. Victims included the new force in the women's field represented by Feminist Voices and the YFAG, Aizhixing, the CWRW, Yirenping, and several of its sister organizations, including Zhengzhou Yirenping and ACTogether, in the health field, www.ilabour.org in the field of migrant workers, and Friends of Prairie in the environmental field. Although some organizations did not directly collide with the state, their insistence on critical pluralism incurred unfriendly relationships with the state. It intentionally marginalized these disobedient organizations by cutting off their financial resources and eventually stifled them. The Ark of Love/the CAP+ and the CMTHF in the health field and the Ocean Protection Commune in the environmental field are typical examples. Other organizations in this category, such as Loving Source and Tianxiagong, another sister organization of Yirenping, voluntarily closed, facing pressures and harassment from various governmental organs.

Some organizations that adopted critical pluralism switched to embedded pluralism or silent pluralism after they encountered state repressions. The COAP and the WNAC in the health field and Beijing Huiling in the field of disability transferred to embedded pluralism. Meng Weina registered the Guangdong Huiling Foundation to replace Beijing Huiling as the new headquarters. These organizations not only survived but made some progress in influencing policies after they completed the transformation. Huiling organizations even expanded to more cities. Loving Source

focused on service delivery and maintained silence in the policy arena after 2006. Unfortunately, it still suffered from state oppression and closed because of its politically sensitive founders.

Several organizations in the health field that embraced critical pluralism voluntarily transformed into embedded pluralism or silent pluralism without undergoing state repressions. The HHC changed to embedded pluralism and has built good relationships with multiple government agencies since its registration in 2012. ITPC-China has stopped policy activities of its own will and maintained silence since 2015. Although it is no longer a salient organization in the field, it survived.

Consequently, critical pluralism has disappeared in the fields of women, health, migrant workers, and disability. Embedded pluralism is the current mainstream mode of policy influence in these fields. Criticisms of the government and aggressive approaches to influence policies are intolerable in these fields. Once organizations crossed or were inclined to cross the red line, state crackdowns ensued. As Gueorguiev (2021, 174) puts it, the options of Chinese citizens are restricted to the CCP brand, and their criticisms are only tolerated within prescribed issue spaces.

However, the environmental field stands out as a special case. A cluster of bottom-up environmental organizations falls into the category of critical pluralism. Unlike their counterparts in other fields, most of these organizations survived the generally restrictive political environment. Only Friends of Steppe and the Ocean Protection Commune underwent state oppression and closed. Furthermore, a few of these organizations are even thriving in exploring new methods and achieving more policy influence. Admittedly, these organizations must also apply some self-restrictions: they only deal with environmental problems and seldom step into other fields; they use aggressive approaches to influence policies but avoid organizing collective petitions and street activities; and most avoid directly involving themselves in environment-related mass incidents.

Nevertheless, they insist on critical pluralism without being punished. As many cases in this research show, they could criticize and act against large-sized state-owned enterprises, local governments, including province-level governments, and even agencies in the central government. As long as they are not opposed to the top leadership of the Party-state and basic state policies, their actions are quite tolerable for the state (Zhan and Tang 2013, 384-385).

Compared with organizations adopting critical pluralism, those embracing silent pluralism or embedded pluralism have better survival opportunities. In the category of silent pluralism, only Loving Source in the health field and www.jianjiaobuluo.com in the field of migrant workers underwent state repressions and shut down. Among organizations that transferred from other modes of policy influence into silent pluralism, Loving Source was the sole organization subject to state oppression. The reason behind these repressions was these two organizations' connections with politically sensitive figures.

In the (sub)categories of embedded pluralism and reduced embedded pluralism, only Walking in the World in the field of migrant workers and the Center for Women's Law Studies and Legal Services of Peking University/Zhongze in the women's field underwent state repressions. The former ceased working, while Beijing Qianqian Law Firm succeeded the latter and is now alive. The reasons behind these unexpected crackdowns are still elusive. Excluding these two organizations, all other organizations adopting embedded pluralism/reduced embedded pluralism are safe, including those that transferred from other modes of policy influence. Furthermore, this research finds that embedded pluralist organizations run by cooperative professionals, such as lawyers, scientists, journalists, social workers, and other experts, may have better opportunities to establish relatively harmonious and stable relationships with governments and influence policies more effectively. This is consistent with Teets' (2018, 128) finding that social organizations

increasingly play “expert” consultative roles to policymakers in China. Examples include Yilian, Zhicheng, Facilitator, and Love Save Pneumoconiosis in the field of migrant workers, the BCLARC in the minors’ field, Hetong in the seniors’ field, and the CLAPV, Shanshui, and the GEI in the environmental field. The GEI even has remarkable policy achievements on the international stage, including pushing forward U.S.-China climate cooperation. The state’s relatively mild attitude toward embedded pluralism explains why this policy influence mode is more popular than critical pluralism.

The state’s attitudes toward organizational networks are the same as those toward individual organizations. In the fields of women and health, many organizations discussed above are (were) network-style organizations connecting different individuals and organizations. For example, the new force was, in fact, a network composed of various individuals and organizations, with Feminist Voices serving as its hub. It was the only visible and active organizational alliance adopting critical pluralism in the women’s field. The state cracked down on many individuals and organizations in the network and eventually repressed the whole alliance. In the health field, the CAP+, the CMTHF, the WNAC, ITPC-China, Birch Woods, and the HHC before registration are (were) network-style organizations. Yirenping and its sister organizations also formed a network. The orientations and destinies of these network-style organizations were already discussed. The CHCN was another network in this field led by Aizhixing. It also followed Aizhixing’s mode of policy influence. After the state repressed Aizhixing, the CHCN automatically ceased working. There are three organizational networks in the field of disability—the China Intellectual Disability Development Network, Heart Alliance, and Inclusion China. Focusing on delivering services and inter-organizational communication, the former two remain silent in the policy arena. Only Inclusion China is active in influencing policies adopting embedded pluralism. The state never

suppressed these three networks. They have a higher chance of survival than those networks adopting critical pluralism in health and women's fields. Multiple organizational networks also exist in the environmental field, e.g., the CRWA, the CZWA, the GCA, the China Rivers Network, the China Civil Climate Action Network, and the Chemical Safety Network. Led by the GEV, the FON, and the IPE, respectively, the CRWA, the CZWA, and the GCA actively influence policies embracing critical pluralism. A few environmental organizations formed the China Rivers Network when they launched the Nu River anti-dam action. The network adopted critical pluralism before it dissolved when the action was completed. However, regardless of their policy influence modes, the state never repressed these networks. Like individual environmental organizations, organizational networks in this field enjoy "conditional tolerance" by the state (Lu and Steinhardt 2022, 120-123).

10.2.3 Quantitative Evidence and Theoretical Explanations

10.2.3.1 Quantitative Evidence

Table 10.1 shows the quantitative distribution of policy influence modes in the seven fields of social organizations in 2012 when Xi Jinping became the General Secretary of the CCP. It synthesizes the data from Chapter Two to Chapter Eight while adjusting according to the time boundary 2012.

Table 10.1 The Distribution of Policy Influence Modes in Seven Fields of Organizations in 2012

		women	health	migrant workers	disabled persons	minors	seniors	environmental
top-down orgs	active state corporatism	11	0	1	1	6	0	3
	passive state corporatism	3	11	0	15	12	6	25
	symbolic state corporatism	16	0	0	0	1	12	9
bottom-up orgs	embedded pluralism	5	4	7	5	1	1	10
	reduced embedded pluralism	0	0	1	5	0	0	0
	critical pluralism	4	8	0	1	0	0	10
	silent pluralism	(9)	21(12)	8(4)	13(11)	14(9)	31(29)	19(9)

Note: Successive organizations or organizations sharing the same management team are counted as one organization; numbers in parentheses are internet websites; students' organizations and women's studies centers are excluded.

The entries in this table represent the number of organizations that existed in 2012. Those in parentheses are the numbers of internet websites, which are included in the numbers before parentheses. Successive organizations or organizations sharing the same management team are counted as one organization. This table excludes students' organizations and women's studies centers because their exact numbers are unclear.

Active state corporatism was absent in the fields of health and seniors. It was prosperous in the fields of women, minors, and environment in terms of quantities. However, provided the significant standing of the ACFTU and the CDPF, fewer active corporatist organizations in the fields of migrant workers and disability do not mean lower levels of policy influence.

A considerable number of passive state corporatist organizations appeared in six fields, reflecting the trend that government agencies assuming major responsibilities in their jurisdictions and active/passive state corporatist organizations need many assistants to implement policies. The

environmental field encompassed the largest number of passive state corporatist organizations because multiple government agencies take charge of environment-related affairs. The absence of passive state corporatism in the field of migrant workers indicated that the ACFTU had not incorporated this underprivileged group into its constituencies for a long time by 2012.

Clusters of symbolic state corporatist organizations appeared in the fields of women, seniors, and environment. In the fields of women and seniors, there existed many organizations affiliated with government agencies not assuming major responsibilities or top-down organizations not playing essential roles. In the environmental field, the symbolic role of the nine organizations was caused by their de facto supervisory bodies that do not have policy functions.

In bottom-up organizations, embedded pluralism was more popular than critical pluralism. The former existed in all seven fields, while the latter appeared in only four fields in 2012. Moreover, 39 organizations adopted embedded pluralism or reduced embedded pluralism, contrasting to 23 organizations embracing critical pluralism. Bottom-up organizations in the fields of minors and seniors were less active than those in other fields because each of these fields had only one active policy advocate, respectively. Critical pluralism appeared in four fields but clustered in the fields of women, health, and environment. As analyzed before, field features, the absence of mass organizations, or adequate international support gave rise to the development of critical pluralism in these three fields.

Silent pluralism existed in all seven fields and took a considerable part of all bottom-up organizations. Although a majority of organizations in this category were internet websites, silent formal organizations were present in most fields. Silent pluralism was more popular in the fields of minors and seniors than in other fields because it accounted for the vast majority of bottom-up organizations in these two fields.

As introduced in Chapter One, in the following decade, 60 new organizations formed while 110 organizations ceased working. In addition, some organizations switched their modes of policy influence. Therefore, many entries in Table 10.1 must have changed by 2022. In this decade, Xi Jinping completed two terms and secured an unprecedented third term after Mao. His administration dramatically changed the institutional environment of social organizations in China. A comparative analysis of the distribution of policy influence modes in 2012 and 2022 will discover the impacts of institutional changes on social organizations' policy influence.

Table 10.2 shows the quantitative distribution of policy influence modes in the seven fields of social organizations in 2022 when Xi Jinping completed two terms and entered the third term. It synthesizes the data from Chapter Two to Chapter Eight while adjusting according to the time boundary 2022. The entries in this table represent the number of organizations that existed in 2022. Those in parentheses are the numbers of internet websites, which are included in the numbers before parentheses. Successive organizations or organizations sharing the same management team are counted as one organization. This table also excludes students' organizations and women's studies centers.

Table 10.2 The Distribution of Policy Influence Modes in Seven Fields of Organizations in 2022

		women	health	migrant workers	disabled persons	minors	seniors	environmental
top-down orgs	active state corporatism	11	0	1	1	6	0	3
	passive state corporatism	3	11	0	17	12	11	24
	symbolic state corporatism	16	0	0	0	1	9	9
bottom-up orgs	embedded pluralism	4	4	6	7	1	1	8
	reduced embedded pluralism	0	0	1	4	0	0	1
	critical pluralism	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
	silent pluralism	4(3)	15(6)	4(0)	9(8)	14(8)	17(15)	15(8)

Note: Successive organizations or organizations sharing the same management team are counted as one organization; numbers in parentheses are internet websites; students' organizations and women's studies centers are excluded.

Table 10.2 demonstrates similar patterns to those disclosed in Table 10.1. It means that institutional changes under the Xi administration did not significantly affect the general landscape of modes of policy influence. However, the total number of organizations dropped from 309 in 2012 to 259 in 2022. This reduction was only from bottom-up organizations. The number of top-down organizations increased slightly from 132 in 2012 to 135 in 2022, while the number of bottom-up organizations significantly decreased from 177 in 2012 to 124 in 2022, reflecting the generally restrictive political environment for bottom-up organizations.

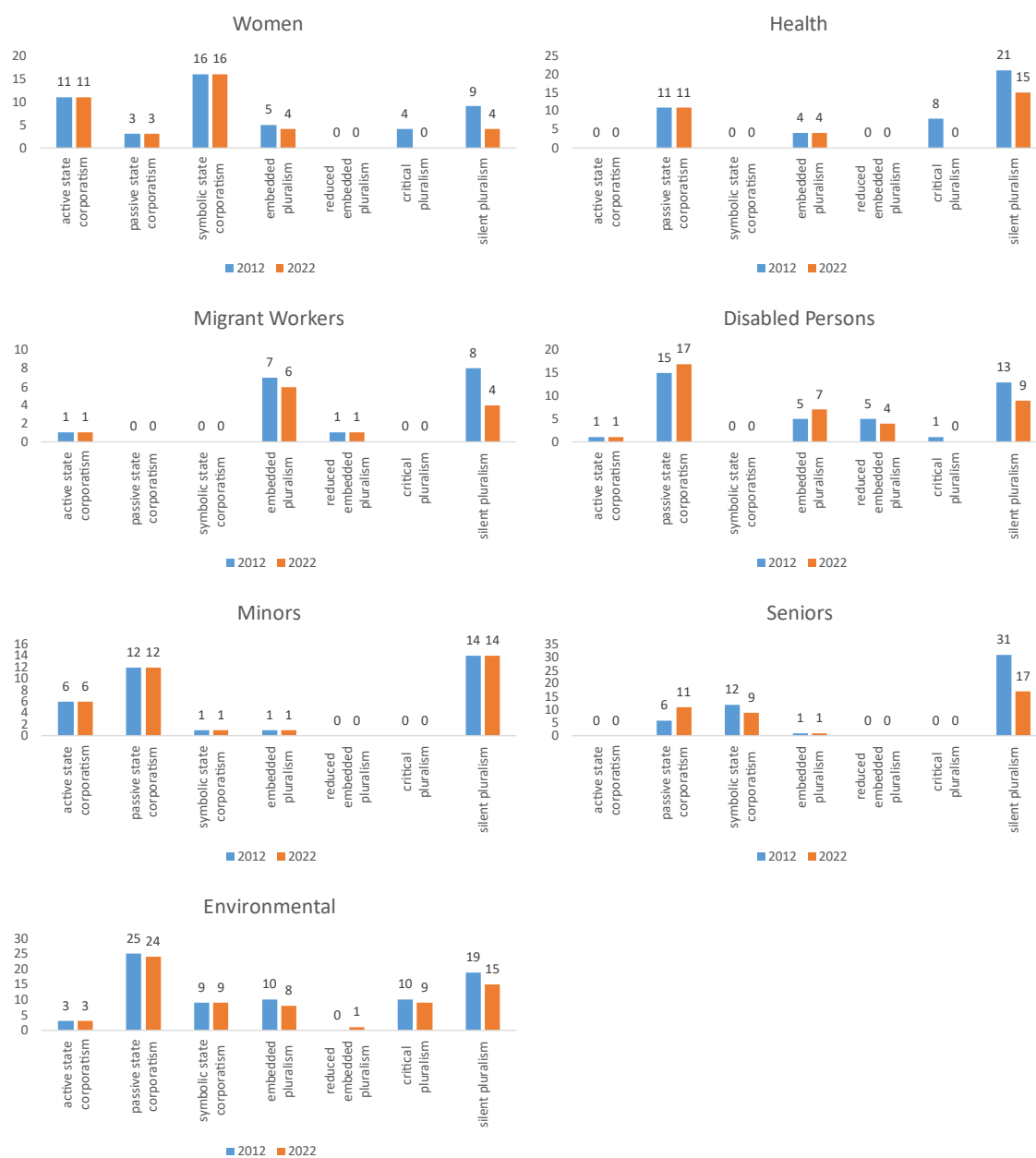
Another significant change was the shrinking quantity and scope of organizations adopting critical pluralism, making embedded pluralism a remarkably more popular mode of policy influence. From 2012 to 2022, the number of organizations adopting critical pluralism dropped from 23 to 9. In the same period, the number of organizations embracing embedded pluralism or

reduced embedded pluralism only dropped from 39 to 37. In 2022, critical pluralism only remained in the environmental field. Other clusters of critical pluralism disappeared.

Figure 10.1 shows the change in organizational quantities in each policy influence mode in the seven fields from 2012 to 2022. The data in this figure are based on Table 10.1 and Table 10.2.

As Figure 10.1 demonstrates, the numbers and distribution of top-down organizations were generally stable from 2012 to 2022. They remained the same in the fields of women, health, migrant workers, and minors. In the environmental field, only passive state corporatist organizations dropped slightly from 25 to 24. In the field of disability, the only change was that the number of passive state corporatist organizations rose from 15 to 17. In the seniors' field, the number of passive state corporatist organizations increased from 6 to 11, while the number of symbolic state corporatist organizations decreased from 12 to 9. The statuses and functions of top-down organizations remained unchanged. The institutional changes under the Xi administration did not negatively impact top-down social organizations. On the contrary, the policy implementation function of top-down organizations was consolidated in two fields of human service organizations—the fields of disability and seniors. As essential assistants facilitating policy implementation in specific domains, they benefited from the new policies of the Xi administration.

Figure 10.1 The Comparison of Policy Influence Modes in Seven Fields of Organizations in 2012 and 2022



Regarding bottom-up organizations, the numbers and distribution of organizations adopting embedded pluralism or reduced embedded pluralism stayed relatively stable from 2012 to 2022. They remained unchanged in the fields of health, minors, and seniors. In the fields of women and migrant workers, reduced embedded pluralism remained the same, while the number of organizations embracing embedded pluralism dropped by one in each field. In the environmental field, the number of organizations adopting embedded pluralism also dropped slightly from 10 in 2012 to 8 in 2022, while one organization fell into the category of reduced embedded pluralism in 2022, compared with none in 2012. In the field of disability, the number of organizations adopting embedded pluralism increased from 5 in 2012 to 7 in 2022, while the number of organizations in the category of reduced embedded pluralism decreased from 5 in 2012 to 4 in 2022. Some bottom-up organizations in this field have become more active in recent years.

Although the distribution of organizations in the category of silent pluralism did not change significantly, their quantities declined dramatically. In 2022, these organizations were 37 less than in 2012. The reduction occurred in six fields except for the minors' field. The seniors' field had the sharpest decline of 14 organizations, in contrast to the consolidation of top-down organizations in this field. On the one hand, it typified the trend that top-down organizations in certain domains benefited more from the new policies of the Xi administration. On the other hand, it showed the disadvantages of bottom-up seniors' organizations in China, as analyzed in Chapter Six. The overall decline of organizations in the category of silent pluralism indicated that inadequate organizational capacity negatively impacted not only the mode of policy influence but also the chance of survival. Facing an unfavorable institutional environment, these organizations suffered the most.

From 2012 to 2022, the numbers and distribution of organizations adopting critical pluralism changed significantly. The total number of these organizations decreased by 14. Critical pluralism existed in the fields of women, health, disability, and environment in 2012. However, it had disappeared entirely from the former three fields by 2022. It only survived in the environmental field, and the number of organizations embracing this policy influence mode in the field only dropped slightly from 10 in 2012 to 9 in 2022.

The above analysis of quantitative evidence shows that in the Xi era, notwithstanding the generally restrictive political environment, the distributions of five modes of policy influence in the seven fields remained relatively stable. The only exception was critical pluralism, which disappeared from three fields but remained solid in the field of environment. This unusual change of distribution calls for further discussion.

10.2.3.2 Theoretical Explanations

Critical pluralism never existed in the fields of minors and seniors. By 2022, it had disappeared from all fields except the environmental field. All organizations in these fields avoid non-collaborative strategies, voluntarily or under compulsion. This homogenization is caused directly or indirectly by institutional changes. Institutional theory provides viable explanations.

As Chapter Nine introduces, institutional theory argues that organizations conform to the rules, norms, values, standards, and expectations prevailing in their institutional environments to gain legitimacy and resources (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Schmid et al. 2008, 583). Isomorphism with environmental institutions promotes the success and survival of organizations (Meyer and Rowan 1977, 348-349). Consequently, an organization can be locked into isomorphism, ceremonially reflecting the institutional environment in its structure, functionalities, procedures, and language (Meyer and Rowan 1977, 349, 352).

DiMaggio and Powell (1983) identify three mechanisms through which institutional isomorphic change occurs. Coercive isomorphism results from both formal and informal pressures exerted on organizations by other organizations upon which they are dependent and by cultural expectations in the society within which organizations function. In some circumstances, organizational change is a direct response to government mandates (DiMaggio and Powell 1983, 150). Mimetic isomorphism occurs when organizations imitate other organizations that they believe possess a high degree of legitimacy, when organizational technologies are poorly understood, when goals are ambiguous, or when the environment creates symbolic uncertainty (Mosley 2012, 845; DiMaggio and Powell 1983, 151–152). Normative isomorphism occurs as a feature of professionalization, specifically shared understanding due to similar formal education and professional networks (Mosley 2012, 845; DiMaggio and Powell 1983, 152).

In China, the government is not only the largest funder for many social organizations but also the most important institutional actor through its laws and legal mandates (Guo 2007, 462). In addition, the government exerts informal pressures on organizations by creating prevailing ideological and cultural expectations. Because Chinese social organizations are highly dependent on the government to gain legitimacy and resources, they must conform to the rules, norms, values, standards, and expectations emanating from the government. When the government cracks down on organizations taking a critical attitude toward the government and employing aggressive approaches to influence policies, directly or indirectly, these organizations must obey. The crackdowns sent signals to similar organizations and created a restrictive political environment. Feeling these institutional pressures, similar organizations closed or switched to safer modes of policy influence even without undergoing repressions. Consequently, all these organizations stayed away from non-collaborative strategies. The result was coercive isomorphism.

These institutional changes gave rise to uncertainties in organizations' environments. When a few organizations change their strategies and switch to other modes of policy influence, other organizations might model themselves on these organizations to cope with uncertainties. As mentioned before, most organizations that transferred from other modes of policy influence into silent pluralism or embedded pluralism survived. Some organizations made progress in influencing policies after they transformed into embedded pluralism. Other organizations adopting critical pluralism might perceive these forerunners as more legitimate or successful and follow suit. Organizations that do not adopt critical pluralism might try to maintain their current policy influence modes. In addition to the coercive mechanism, mimetic processes occurred, resulting in institutional isomorphism.

The disappearance of critical pluralism in these fields could not be attributed to normative isomorphism. Organizations adopting critical pluralism in these fields did not undergo widespread professionalization. There has been no well-developed formal education system or professional networks in these fields. In the environmental field, where critical pluralism still exists, more professionalized organizations, such as the GEI, the FON, and the IPE, embrace different modes of policy influence.

The environmental field stands out as a special case. Most organizations adopting critical pluralism survived, and a few are even thriving in exploring new methods and achieving more policy influence. As analyzed before, it is an unconventional field without mass organizations, and it still receives some international support. These elements contribute to the formation of critical pluralism in this field and a few other fields. However, they cannot explain why critical pluralism only survived in the environmental field. According to institutional theory, the environmental field

must have a less restrictive institutional environment than other fields. However, institutional theory cannot disclose the reason behind this difference.

The theory of political opportunity structures (POS) provides essential insights into this issue. As Chapter One introduces, scholars have applied the POS framework to analyze social organizations' policy influence in China (Xie and Van Der Heijden, 2010; Zhan and Tang, 2013; Teets and Almen, 2018). Xie and Van Der Heijden (2010) find that the changed POS in China empowered environmental movements and led to positive outcomes in the campaign against the Nu River Dam project. Zhan and Tang (2013) also discover that political structural changes created better opportunities for civic environmental organizations' policy advocacy during the 2000s. However, these studies do not cover the impact of changing POS in the Xi Jinping era on the policy influence of environmental organizations.

Eisinger (1973) first introduced the notion of the structure of political opportunities to investigate how elements of the political environment affected protest behaviors in American cities. Scholars have developed the notion into a theoretical framework after that. According to Tilly and Tarrow (2015, 49), political opportunity structures are aspects of a regime that offer challengers both openings to advance their claims and threats and constraints that caution them against making these claims. The critical argument of the POS theory is the recognition that a social movement is profoundly affected by a shifting constellation of factors exogenous to the movement itself (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996, 1633).

Scholars construct different but related conceptualizations concerning specific exogenous factors shaping social movements. Eisinger (1973) underscores the openness of political regimes. Kitschelt (1986) complements this construction by adding the output phase of the policy cycle—the capacity of political regimes to implement policies. Both scholars focus on formal institutional

structures. Kriesi et al. (1995) and Van Der Heijden (1997) put forward a POS concept comprising four components: cleavage structures, institutional structures, prevailing strategies, and alliance structures. Tarrow (1998) refines his original concept of POS and claims that it has five dimensions: openness or closure of formal political access, repression or facilitation strategy political elites adopt, stability or instability of political alignments, conflicts within and among elites, and the availability of influential allies. However, Kriesi (1995, 167-168) deems that the latter three dimensions are concerned with the configuration of power among the relevant actors within a political system. Instead, he proposes three dimensions within the POS domain: formal institutional structure, informal procedures and prevailing strategies with regard to challengers, and the configuration of power relevant to the confrontation with the challengers. The first two dimensions provide the general setting for the mobilization of collective action and constrain the relevant configurations of power.

Scholars studying Chinese social organizations are inclined to use this three-dimensional model when they apply the POS theory to their analyses (Xie 2009, 43-44; Xie and Van Der Heijden, 2010; Zhan and Tang, 2013; Teets and Almen, 2018). In addition to these three dimensions, Xie (2009, 43-44) and Xie and Van Der Heijden (2010) add a fourth dimension of political output structure. Following the common ground of these scholars, this research also employs the three-dimensional model. Social organizations have better opportunities to advance their claims as certain changes occur in their political environments. When the formal institutional structure becomes more open, more actors are involved in political processes, and more political decisions are dispersed (Xie and Van Der Heijden 2010, 53). Regarding the informal strategies of political elites, when they show the tendency to facilitate or assimilate challengers' claims and actions, the government's propensity and capacity for political repression decrease (Zhan and Tang

2013, 383; Xie and Van Der Heijden 2010, 53; Teets and Almen 2018, 2). Concerning the configuration of power within a political system, when unstable alignments and conflicts among political elites arise, challengers have more opportunities to partner with influential allies (Zhan and Tang 2013, 384).

As Xie (2009, 44) argues, the informal strategies of political elites comprise an important aspect for examining the movement opportunities provided by the Chinese political system because the role of top leaders of the CCP is extremely important in a one-party state such as China. As Chapter Seven introduces, Xi Jinping is a rare top leader of the Party-state who highly emphasizes environmental protection, and his administration has treated environmental protection as one of its strongholds to gain ground. Constructing ecological civilization was included in the CCP's Five-sphere Integrated Plan² as a basic state policy. In 2018, Xi Jinping put forward his Thoughts on Ecological Civilization as one of the country's ideological and policy guidelines. The top leadership's eco-friendly strategy creates a relatively tolerant atmosphere for environmental organizations' claims and actions. Accordingly, the government's propensity for political repression decreases. This general setting gave rise to political opportunities in the other two dimensions.

The Xi administration pushed forward many formal institutional changes in the environmental field. Both the revised CCP Constitution and the Constitution of the PRC incorporated ecological civilization construction for the first time. The administration enacted or revised many environment-related laws, regulations, rules, and other policies. The most significant change was that the revised Environmental Protection Law incorporated an entire chapter

² The Five-sphere Integrated Plan refers to China's overall plan for building socialism with Chinese characteristics, that is, to promote coordinated progress in the economic, political, cultural, social, and eco-environmental spheres.

regarding the disclosure of environmental information and public participation and instituted EPIL for the first time. Many environmental organizations were involved in the revision process. The Civil Code also included the “green” principle and many “green” articles. The MEP enacted multiple departmental rules to promote public participation in environmental protection and regulate environmental information disclosure by enterprises and public institutions (Dai 2019, 35-37). In recent years, China set the target of hitting peak carbon emissions before 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality by 2060 (30-60 targets) and issued relevant policies (Teng and Wang 2021, S152). Overall, the formal institutional structure in the environmental field is becoming more open, and environmental organizations have more opportunities to participate in the political processes. As Zhan and Tang (2013, 385, 389) note, environmental organizations actively cite these laws to justify their actions against local governments and polluting firms. They have taken advantage of legislative changes that instituted both public participation requirements and limited measures for governmental transparency.

The rise of agencies taking charge of environment-related affairs provoked unstable power alignments and intensified conflicts among various authorities. As the Nu River and Xiaonanhai anti-dam campaigns showed, conflicts between the MEP and agencies in charge of economic development and local governments and between local governments in different areas loomed. Under these circumstances, agencies in the environmental sector tend to ally with environmental organizations to strengthen themselves in conflicts. After the MEP and the SFA consolidated their positions and expanded their jurisdictions in the official system, they reinforced top-down organizations affiliated with them and deepened their cooperation with bottom-up environmental organizations. They conducted more joint projects with bottom-up environmental organizations and increasingly invited them to attend policy meetings. Some organizations embracing critical

pluralism, such as the FON and the IPE, even obtained such opportunities. As Zhan and Tang (2013, 384) note, the central government, especially the Ministry of Environmental Protection, has begun to encourage, though in a relatively limited way, voluntary actions by citizens and environmental organizations as watchdogs of local governments and business firms against major pollution activities. Dai and Spiers (2017, 82) find similar cooperation between local environmental protection bureaucracies and environmental organizations in Guangzhou and Shenzhen. In 2017, the MEP and the MOCA jointly issued Guiding Opinions on Leading the Development of Environmental Social Organizations and Improving Regulations, which promotes direct registration, governments' procurement of services, and orderly participation of environmental organizations. The power configuration change offered environmental organizations better opportunities to partner with influential allies in the official system.

Therefore, environmental organizations in China take advantage of opportunities created by political changes in the Xi era. As the government's propensity for repressing environmental organizations decreases, they have a better chance to survive. The changing power alignments and increasing cleavages among different authorities give rise to influential allies in the official system. This field's more open formal institutional structure gives them more access to the policy process. All these unique opportunities create a favorable institutional context for environmental organizations, which is different from that for organizations in other fields. These non-state actors are tolerated, approved, and even incorporated into government agencies' work (Xie and Van Der Heijden 2010, 64). Even environmental organizations adopting critical pluralism benefit from these political changes. They do not need to switch to other policy influence modes without the threat of crackdowns. Consequently, a cluster of environmental organizations embracing critical

pluralism survived, and a few of them are even thriving in exploring new methods and achieving more policy influence.

10.3 The Major Contributions of This Research

As Chapter One introduces, the scholarship on the policy influence of Chinese social organizations is an emerging realm on the new issue-oriented research agenda. Although it has established the independent status of the research topic, this field of study leaves many issues underexamined or unexplored. This research attempts to fill in some gaps in the existing literature and make a few innovations.

First, most studies in the existing literature focus on one or two types of social organizations. Comparative studies on the policy influence of Chinese social organizations across various organizational fields have yet to be conducted. Encompassing and comparing seven fields of social organizations, this research draws a panoramic picture of and provides more comprehensive insights into the policy influence of Chinese social organizations. It is the first systematic study of social organizations' policy influence in the fields of disability, minors, and seniors. In the field of migrant workers, this research calls for switching the focus from labor movements to influencing labor policies. In the fields of women, health, and environment, this research conducts more detailed case studies covering a relatively long period. A few significant cases, such as the Center for Women's Law Studies and Legal Services of Peking University and the childbearing right of female graduate students, advocating compulsory licenses for the domestic production of lamivudine, Yilian, and the GEI and U.S.-China climate cooperation, appear in academic research for the first time. Regarding other well-documented cases, such as the Nu River and Xiaonanhai anti-dam campaigns, this research provides more general pictures and covers the most recent updates of the cases.

Second, the existing literature has underexamined the policy influence of top-down social organizations. This research conducts in-depth studies on the policy influence of many individual GONGOs and comparative studies of GONGOs across seven fields. It is the first comprehensive research on the policy influence of China's top-down social organizations. In contrast to the monolithic perspective that GONGOs should have more policy influence than grassroots organizations, this research finds variations within the sector of GONGOs. It generalizes them into three policy influence modes—active state corporatism, passive state corporatism, and symbolic state corporatism. In addition, the quantitative analysis in this research finds that bottom-up organizations are more inclined to influence policies and take action in practice than top-down organizations, albeit they are not more influential in achieving policy goals. Furthermore, this research discovers that the policy influence modes of top-down organizations stem from the exterior source— authorization and empowerment from the state or their supervisory bodies—and discusses the formation of these policy influence modes. Although the interest representation of active state corporatist organizations has inherent limitations, they are influential actors in their respective jurisdictions. Many active and passive state corporatist organizations serve as platforms connecting the grassroots and the government. The partnership between grassroots organizations and top-down organizations effectively pushed forward policy changes in a few salient cases, such as enacting the Anti-domestic Violence Law, the Law on Employment Contracts, and the Interim Provisions on Labor Dispatch, revising the Regulation on Work-Related Injury Insurance and the Law on the Prevention and Treatment of Occupational Diseases, and abolishing “the crime of whoring with underage girls.” The findings of this research indicate that the sector of GONGOs is an important subject to study from both academic and practical perspectives.

Third, the existing research primarily concentrates on social organizations engaging in influencing policies. To obtain a more panoramic picture of the landscape of organizations' policy influence, this research also investigates those staying away from policy issues. This research finds that non-engagement exists in both top-down and bottom-up organizations and names them symbolic state corporatism and silent pluralism, respectively. Symbolic state corporatism is determined by organizations' supervisory bodies. Government agencies not assuming major responsibilities in a field, top-down organizations not playing essential roles in a field, or those supervisory bodies that do not have policy functions are inclined to make affiliated organizations symbolic. In contrast, silent pluralism is mainly caused by endogenous factors. Both organizational capacity and willingness to influence policies are indispensable for an organization to move out of silent pluralism. However, a few organizations switched to this category because of the threat of state repression.

Studying these organizations paves the way for further research on promoting their policy engagement. A few cases in this research can inspire both researchers and practitioners. The CBCGDF is a case that successfully moved out of symbolic state corporatism. On the one hand, its new proactive leaders, such as Hu Deping, Zhou Jinfeng, Ma Yong, and Lü Keqin, have played essential roles. On the other hand, it often cooperates with bottom-up organizations, such as the FON and the CLAPV, to file EPILs and influence environmental policies. To boost policy engagement of symbolic/passive state corporatist organizations, active bottom-up organizations need to identify those with open-minded leaders and cooperate with them to conduct policy activities. The GAD and the Media Monitor for Women Network maintained loose structures and remained silent in the policy arena over a long period. Lü Pin changed the trajectories of these organizations through formalization and professionalization in 2009. They both embraced critical

pluralism and became a part of the new force in the Chinese women's movement. These two cases indicate that improving the internal management of silent organizations is crucial for promoting their willingness and capacity to influence policies. Active bottom-up organizations can play an important role in achieving this goal. For example, the Blue Defenders project led by the FON and the IPE has facilitated more than 60 local environmental organizations to build capacities in combatting pollution and enhancing government transparency. A few environmental organizations, including the SEE, Wild China Film, and the CFCA, are inclined to influence policies through other organizations. Active policy advocates, such as the FON, the IPE, and Shanshui, often lend a hand and try to involve them in policy actions.

Fourth, the existing literature concentrates on collaborative strategies adopted by social organizations. This research also finds that it is a popular policy influence mode and names it embedded pluralism. However, this research discloses that many organizations adopt(ed) non-collaborative strategies to influence policies and names this policy influence mode critical pluralism. Although critical pluralism is less popular than embedded pluralism, it is not less effective in influencing policies. In addition to the choices of organizational leadership, field features, the absence of mass organizations, and international support are causes of critical pluralism. The discovery of critical pluralism has profound meaning because it reflected institutional changes in the Xi era. The Xi administration created a more restrictive political environment for most bottom-up social organizations. Consequently, critical pluralism has disappeared in the fields of women, health, migrant workers, and disability thanks to state repression or the threat of repression. However, a cluster of bottom-up environmental organizations embracing critical pluralism survived. A few of them are even thriving in exploring

new methods and achieving more policy influence. This research applies institutional theory and the theory of political opportunity structures to explain this unique finding.

The discovery of critical pluralism also has implications for social organizations' strategic choices. In the state's highly prioritized areas, such as the environment and HIV/AIDS, it might tolerate organizations adopting critical pluralism and allow them to play active roles in interest representation and the policy process. Social organizations can grasp these political opportunities to set more ambitious goals and employ more aggressive approaches to influence policies. In those areas to which the state attaches less importance, such as the fields of disability, juniors, and seniors, social organizations generally have to adopt collaborative strategies to influence policies in the absence of political opportunities. In the field of disability, embedded pluralism has been the mainstream mode of policy influence. Beijing Huiling was the only exceptional organization that embraced critical pluralism. As a consequence, it was harassed by multiple state organs and struggled for survival. In 2013, Meng Weina registered the Guangdong Huiling Foundation and moved the headquarters of Huiling organizations to this foundation the following year. Since then, the foundation has switched to embedded pluralism by abandoning aggressive approaches and avoiding politically sensitive issues. Consequently, Huiling organizations expanded quickly across the country. However, the state's priority may change over time. As the HIV/AIDS crisis was under control and international institutions departed, the state no longer gave priority to this area, and China's governance structure in the health field returned to the state-dominant model. With diminishing opportunities, the space for critical pluralism disappeared from this field. Organizations maintaining critical pluralism, such as Aizhixing, Yirenping, the CWRW, the CMTHF, and Ark of Love/CAP+, were directly repressed or indirectly strangled by the state. In

contrast, the WNAC and the HHC switched to embedded pluralism. They not only survived but have cultivated good relationships with the official system and remained active policy advocates.

Fifth, this research explores various factors shaping organizations' policy influence. Using quantitative data collected from the surveys conducted by the author, this research tests three leading theories in the existing body of literature—resource mobilization theory, resource dependence theory, and institutional theory. It provides empirical evidence to support resource mobilization theory and institutional theory but fails to verify resource dependence theory. The results of this research and those of the existing studies complement each other. However, this research fills the gap in the existing literature by testing two underexamined or unexplored factors—formalization and professionalization of organizations and international connections—and finds their significantly positive effects on policy influence. This research also finds that government relations generally foster organizations' policy influence. In addition, organizational age, size, and relationships with constituencies are positively associated with certain dimensions of policy influence. Based on this empirical evidence, Chapter Nine discusses the practical implications for practitioners operating social organizations in China, which is generally absent from existing quantitative studies. Furthermore, this research finds that two factors, the size of organizational constituencies and descriptive representation, have no impact on the formation of policy influence modes and the level of policy influence. The existing literature rarely discusses these two factors.

Sixth, the existing research studies social organizations' policy actions and the effectiveness of some actions. In so doing, the scholarship primarily concentrates on social organizations engaging in influencing policies while neglecting those that remain silent in the policy arena. To fill the gap by investigating these organizations, this research adds a dimension

of willingness to the ordinary concept of policy influence that usually only includes action and effectiveness. This research finds that some bottom-up organizations in the category of silent pluralism stopped proceeding even if they were willing to influence policies and further explores the other cause of inaction—inadequate organizational capacity. In addition, those top-down organizations in the category of passive state corporatism have a low willingness to influence policies despite their moderate actions in the policy process. This research finds that the cause of the controversy lies in their exogenous participation impetus—authorization and empowerment from the state or their supervisory bodies. These findings demonstrate the value of adding the dimension of willingness to influence policies. Furthermore, this research discovers that some organizations in the categories of embedded pluralism or critical pluralism took frequent actions to influence policies but achieved little. If only effectiveness to influence policies is considered, these organizations' impacts will be left out. Therefore, comprehensive research inherently calls for this multi-level or multi-dimensional definition of policy influence. Quantitative studies also prove its value. The empirical analysis in Chapter Nine shows that one dimension of this concept cannot replace the other two dimensions, and this multi-dimensional definition leads to a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of organizations' policy influence. The innovation of this multi-dimensional definition of policy influence is one of this research's contributions to the existing body of literature.

Finally, scholars have applied various theoretical frameworks to analyze social organizations' policy influence in China. This research also uses quantitative data to test three theories—resource mobilization theory, resource dependence theory, and institutional theory. In addition, it applies institutional theory and the theory of political opportunity structures to explain the distribution change of critical pluralism in five organizational fields.

However, this research creates a new analytical framework from theoretical deductions and inductive generalizations of practical cases. The existing studies on social organizations' policy influence in China circumvent the civil society/state corporatism approaches entirely, which dominated the research on China's state-society relations for an extended period. Nevertheless, most of these studies accept that state-society relations are crucial in shaping organizations' policy influence. This research stitches both academic traditions by applying the civil society/state corporatism approaches to analyzing social organizations' policy influence in China.

In addition to these approaches, the framework incorporates the stages model of the policy process and the concept of substantive representation. In the context of China, only Guo and Zhang (2013) and Zhang and Guo (2021a) apply the concept of substantive representation in quantitative studies on Chinese social organizations' "representational mix" and its relationship with advocacy. This research introduces the concept into cross-field comparative case studies for the first time. Several other studies apply the stages model of the policy process to analyze social organizations' policy influence in China. Wang (2008) claims that the emergence of the associational revolution in contemporary China has contributed to the rise of two new agenda-setting models—the outside access model and the popular-pressure model. Du (2012) studies different opportunities and strategies of the ADVN and the ACWF when they participated in the agenda-setting and formulation stages of three laws. Cai et al. (2022) find that social work organizations in Shenzhen and Nanjing have more influence on local policy formulation and implementation, while they tend to comply with the government's policy agenda. The congruence between these studies and this research is that policy initiative is an essential sign of active policy participation—Cai et al. (2022) provide negative cases that exercised strict self-censorship in initiating new policies. However, these studies overlook that organizations' participation in different policy stages indicates different

degrees of policy influence in the context of China. This research discloses this association and integrates it into the analytical framework. As the framework shows, the level of policy influence descends according to the order of active, passive, and symbolic state corporatism. Active state corporatist organizations can go through all policy stages, while passive state corporatist organizations cannot, even though they are major policy implementation entities. Agenda setting is the stage in which these organizations usually refrain from participating. Symbolic state corporatist organizations only facilitate policy implementation occasionally and do not participate in other policy stages. Regarding bottom-up organizations, those embracing embedded pluralism or critical pluralism try to participate in all policy stages, while those in the category of silent pluralism generally avoid policy activities. The former is significantly more influential in the policy process than the latter.

The formation of the framework also relies on the anatomic scan of each organization and comparative case studies within and across various organizational fields. Chapters two to eight classify each organization into different modes of policy (non)influence and present in-depth case studies to typify each policy (non)influence mode. After testing the framework in multiple organizational fields, this research proves that the framework is adequately valid because no organization operates outside the six modes of policy (non)influence defined in the framework. This framework covers a wide range of social organizations, from the most active policy advocates to the least active ones within both top-down and bottom-up organizations, and incorporates both collaborative and non-collaborative strategies. It is the first comprehensive framework that could be applied to analyze the policy influence of all social organizations in China. This innovative analytical framework is another significant contribution of this research to the existing literature.

10.4 The Limitations of This Research

Even with the contributions concluded above, this research has a few limitations. The surveys were conducted before Xi Jinping took power. In addition, the cross-sectional data do not permit causal inference. Although organizational information was regularly updated after that via indirect ways, tracking surveys are optimal for updating data systematically via direct ways, especially for those variables requiring organizations' subjective judgments. Longitudinal data will open the way for more comparative studies, trend analysis, and causal inference. As Chapter Nine mentions, another limitation of the surveys is the relatively small sample size, which prohibits introducing more independent variables into the models and rigorous statistical analyses of field differences. What is more, the surveys did not include questions regarding policy influence modes because they were conducted before or during the theoretical construction of the analytical framework. Consequently, quantitative analyses of those factors' effects on the selection or formation of policy influence modes became impossible. Future research may study these issues based on updated data collected through tracking surveys with refined questionnaires and an enlarged sample size.

Interviews conducted for this research have similar limitations. Because many interviews were also conducted before or during the theoretical construction of the analytical framework, direct questions about organizations' incentives to adopt certain policy influence modes were rarely asked, albeit many questions were indirectly related to the issue. In addition, more interviews were conducted with bottom-up social organizations than with top-down organizations or government officials because the latter two were often much more challenging to approach. Other scholars met the same difficulties (Li et al. 2016, 108). However, the author interviewed some leaders of top-down organizations and government officials employing various personal

connections. Most leaders of top-down organizations provided helpful information, while government officials usually just repeated official rhetoric or documents. Future research may design refined interview structures and involve more leaders of top-down organizations.

Another significant limitation of this research is sampling. This research mainly focuses on national-level organizations in Beijing because they are supposed to be more active and influential in the policy process. However, in so doing, this research does not cover local and rural social organizations located in other parts of the country. Fortunately, some studies focus on local and rural social organizations (Hansen, 2008; Deng and O'Brien, 2014; Lu and Tao, 2017; Robins, 2018; Farid, 2019; Farid and Li, 2021). These studies and this research complement each other.

Many scholars have researched social organizations in various parts of China, and some research compares different regions. For example, Yu et al. (2021) find various effects of central government funding on nonprofits' administrative advocacy in western and non-western regions and explain these effects by regional variation of resource availability and institutional environment. Although this research includes some organizations outside of Beijing because they are leading organizations in their fields or cooperated with Beijing's organizations to influence policies, it does not focus on any regions other than Beijing and compares social organizations in different regions.

Beijing's organizations can serve as an epitome of the development of social organizations in the entire nation. However, it does not mean that the distribution of policy influence modes in a specific field is the same everywhere. Future research may apply the framework developed in this research to other organizational fields, more administrative levels, and other regions, especially those regions with quite different settings from Beijing.

One such region is Yunnan province. As an ethnic minority area close to the border, the central government provides provincial and local governments more flexibility and leeway to implement innovative programs (Farid and Li 2021, 605). In response to the severe AIDS crisis in the region, many domestic and international organizations formed and operated in Yunnan in the 1990s. Thanks to development challenges and ecological diversity, many poverty alleviation and environmental organizations are also active in the region (Teets 2015a, 161-162). According to Teets (2015a, 159-160), the two main models of civil society management in China are the more autonomous model represented by Guangdong (and formerly Yunnan) province and the more supervised model represented by Beijing. The more autonomous model is based on a significant role for international NGOs and collaboration between local government agencies and independent grassroots groups. The supervised model focuses on a government-led process of group development through nonprofit incubators and funding based on social-service outsourcing. However, regulatory changes occurred at the national and provincial levels in 2010, making the Yunnan model resemble the Beijing model (Teets, 2015a). Future research may investigate whether Yunnan organizations' policy influence modes have also changed accordingly.

The other region is Guangdong province, especially the Pearl River Delta (PRD), which includes Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Hong Kong, and Macau. It is one of the most economically developed areas in China. As Teets (2015a, 159) puts it, Guangdong exemplifies the more autonomous model of civil society management. The most significant feature of the civil society in this region was the existence of a cluster of bottom-up labor organizations (Pan 2020, 26, 48; Elfstrom 2021, 38).

Migrant labor organizations appeared in the PRD in the late 1990s (Becker 2014, 157; Pan 2020, 53; Elfstrom 2021, 95), and their funding has come almost exclusively from abroad (Zhang

and Smith 2009, 69; Pan 2020, 69-73; Jakimów 2021, 106). Fu (2018, 38-42) points out that migrant organizations in Beijing and the PRD differ along three dimensions: Beijing organizations were founded by white-collar professionals and some migrant workers, while PRD organizations were established by disenfranchised migrant workers and seasoned labor activists from Hong Kong; Beijing organizations largely serve migrant workers employed in the construction and services industries while PRD organizations mainly serve migrant workers in the manufacturing sector; Beijing organizations share a more symbiotic relationship with the state while their PRD counterparts adopted more contentious mobilization tactics and maintained more fraught relationships with the state. In an article published in 2017, the same author concludes Guangdong labor organizations tended to be more contentious in three respects: they adopted more confrontational rights advocacy tactics; they were almost exclusively funded by foreign sources; and they typically avoided collaboration with the state (Fu 2017, 448). Other researchers also document the involvement of movement-oriented PRD labor organizations in confrontational labor contentions such as strikes, protests, independent collective bargaining, sit-ins, and petitions (Becker, 2014; Leung, 2015; Chen and Yang, 2017; Xu and Schmalz, 2017; Froissart, 2018; Chen and Gallagher 2018, 1037-1045; Franceschini and Lin, 2019; Chen W., 2020; Pan 2020, 165-185; Elfstrom 2021, 87-109; Jakimów 2021, 167-169, 172-178). Li C. (2021) claims that the activities of these NGOs constituted the embryo of a counterhegemonic labor movement.

However, these militant actions invited periodic crackdowns, especially after Xi Jinping took power. Three major rounds of crackdowns occurred in 2012, 2015, and 2019 (Xu 2013, 255; Chan, 2016; Estlund 2017, 70-71, 179-189; Franceschini and Nesossi, 2018; Howell and Pringle, 2019; Lam 2020, 13; Luo and Chan 2020, 140-141; Pan 2020, 79-82, 196; Elfstrom 2021, 104, 141; Jakimów 2021, 78-82, 107; Li C., 2021). The first two rounds of repressions caused

atomization, strategic changes, and weakened solidarity in these organizations (Franceschini and Nesossi 2018, 126-129; Lam 2020, 209-210), while the crackdown in 2019 incapacitated these NGOs and the embryonic labor movement (Li C., 2021). Formal civil society groups were much less at the forefront than before (Elfstrom 2021, 142). The fate of these movement-oriented NGOs under institutional pressures was the same as that of many social organizations embracing critical pluralism. It is reasonable to conjecture that migrant labor organizations in the PRD mainly adopted critical pluralism to influence policies. For example, Zhang and Smith (2009, 78), Fu (2018, 45-46), and Jakimów (2021,79, 165-167) record that Zhang Zhiru, founder of Shenzhen Chunfeng Labor Disputes Services Center, cooperated with several other labor NGOs to launch online or street signature campaigns, supporting the abolition of labor arbitration fees in 2006. Nonetheless, a few other scholars find some labor NGOs in the PRD tried to build constructive and cooperative relationships with the government or organizations with official backgrounds and employed similar tactics as those of embedded pluralism to influence labor policies (Froissart 2011, 19-22; He and Huang, 2015; Howell 2015, 713). Unfortunately, as Chapter Four discusses, little research focused on the policy influence of migrant labor organizations, including those in the PRD. Consequently, how those organizations influenced labor policies remains unclear up to the present. Future studies may fill in the gap by investigating their history and status quo and further compare policy influence modes of migrant labor organizations in the PRD with those of their counterparts in other regions.

10.5 The Road Ahead: The Implications for China's Political Development

As the first chapter introduces, scholars' and practitioners' interest in Chinese social organizations originated from the democratization of former communist countries in Eastern Europe and the 1989 Tiananmen Square demonstrations. They expected that the formation of a

civil society would facilitate China's democratization. However, with a deepening understanding of Chinese social organizations, two opposite views of their implications for China's political development arose.

The negative perspective holds that Chinese social organizations have no potential to serve as vehicles for democratic change. Howell (1998, 71-72) presents three reasons: the emerging Chinese civil society is not a critical public sphere; Chinese social organizations have no consciously articulated democratic agenda; and they lack any sense of being unified in opposition to the state. Spires (2011, 35-36) argues that because grassroots groups exist under a constant threat of suppression, they survive only insofar as they limit any democratic claims-making and help promote the social welfare goals of the state. Consequently, these groups are far too weak to be the natural agents of democratization. Zhan and Tang (2016, 598) deem that while Chinese civic environmental NGOs' close ties to the government may help move the landscape of environmental governance toward a more collaborative one, such a path may also lead to a corporatist regime, given the fiscal capacity of the Chinese government. NGO development has never gone beyond the constraints set by the authoritarian regime, and most NGOs have so far been in service or in support of continuing authoritarianism. Hildebrandt (2013, 5) holds that because Chinese social organizations forged a "harmonious" existence by acting in the service of the state, their emergence does not herald the birth of a strong, independent civil society that could challenge the authoritarian regime. On the contrary, the emergence of these organizations has the more likely effect of helping the authoritarian state persist. He describes the consequences of these organizations' activities as follows: first, the better they do their work, the more likely they are to eliminate pressing social problems (e.g., widespread water pollution or spreading HIV/AIDS) that, if unresolved, could undermine the regime; second, Chinese social organizations might increase the legitimacy of the

state by improving the government's image in the eyes of the general public; third, they could act as a release valve for pent-up grievances within society. In short, Chinese social organizations might serve the interests of regime resiliency instead of undermining it (Hildebrandt 2013, 5, 167-168).

The commonality of these arguments is that only an explicit stance in opposition to the state can facilitate democratic change, and any activities from which the state may benefit hinder political development. In fact, movements opposing the regime appeared in China. Falun Gong, the New Citizen Movement, and the Southern Street Movement are typical examples. However, the state cracked down on these movements brutally. It even clamped down on less aggressive organizations and activists that it considered threats, such as those in the fields of women, health, labor, and environment, as recorded by this research. The disappearance of these forces made their social influence unsustainable, let alone substantive democratic change. When survival becomes the foremost mission of an organization, not challenging the political regime openly is a natural strategic choice. It is why Chinese social organizations, including those embracing critical pluralism, try to avoid opposing the state directly. Even though they take such a stance, they may be suspicious in the eyes of the state. Huang's (2018) empirical study shows that Chinese authorities tend to narrow the institutional space for registered social organizations and ban more organizations during times of social and political instability. Therefore, the state treats many social organizations as exploitable potential threats instead of trustworthy partners. No matter how close they are to the state, they are not a part of the official system.

The argument that any organizational activities from which the state may benefit stymie political development is also untenable. When organizational activities also benefit constituencies or the general public, they promote human welfare. As Qiaoan (2022, 139) notes, the improvement

of social justice and social welfare under the current political system of China is no less important than democratization. Leaving pressing social problems, such as widespread water pollution or HIV/AIDS, unresolved will not guarantee democratic change but lead to social catastrophes and chaos, which may spill over into the entire world. Democracy should not be built on humanitarian disasters. On the contrary, resolving pressing social problems will bring social organizations credit and influence in constituencies and the government, which paves the way for more civic engagement and better governance, critical elements of political development.

The positive perspective on the political implications of Chinese social organizations contrasts sharply with the negative perspective. Moore (2001, 63) asserts that China's civil society, though still constrained, should be understood as laying the groundwork for future political reforms by fostering the participation, pluralism, and decentralization generally associated with liberal democracy. Morton (2005, 526-528) argues that the real political value of NGOs in China lies in their potential to help create the necessary conditions for a more just and democratic society: they play an important educating role within communities; they provide an important stimulus for increasing public participation; if well-coordinated, NGOs can enhance government transparency and accountability; and they provide a channel for the import of international democratic ideas and practices. Mertha (2010) depicts his framework of "fragmented authoritarianism 2.0" as political liberalization and pluralization within China's authoritarian governance system. Focusing on actual substantive policy change, it is a process akin to the post-1960s social movement conclusion that "to change the system, you have to become part of it," or at the very least to "work with it" (Mertha 2010, 81). Dai and Spires (2017) accentuate that the increased policy engagement of many Chinese environmental NGOs opens up new pathways for robust civic engagement by ordinary citizens and civil society organizations, even though their cooperation with the state may improve

its performance. Qiaoan (2022, 139) claims that even though Chinese activists are not demanding democratization explicitly, their participation in the policy process no doubt contributes to the pluralization of society and good governance in general. Teets (2014, 36-37) states that selected groups possess channels for limited participation in the policy process under her consultative authoritarianism model. By increasing transparency and pluralism in the policymaking process, civil society improves governance and contributes to improved welfare outcomes in China. It might indicate the possibility of a gradual process of political reform, at least with regard to public participation in policymaking, without a democratic revolution (Teets 2014, 26). Farid and Li (2021, 607) also argue that the Chinese environment is one in which spaces exist for natural, organic, and non-revolutionary change to occur gradually and incrementally through the emergence of collaborative dynamics that gain traction and change the landscape over time. The observations of reciprocal engagement between NGOs and the government and the resultant policy influence are more akin to plants that take root and eventually split rocks.

In short, the positive perspective emphasizes improved human welfare, civic engagement, and governance, pluralism in the policy process, and the spread of democratic values as consequences of the development of social organizations in China, even though they may benefit the authoritarian state simultaneously. The gradual endogenous evolution in China is in the direction of democratic change and serves as an impetus for democratization in the long run.

Although this perspective notes the contributions of many social organizations to China's political development, it paints an over-optimistic picture of China's political future. Democratization is a long and complex process that many factors could interrupt. The fundamental obstacle is the authoritarian state. Even worse, the current politically conservative leadership and generally restrictive political environment make the road bumpier. Autocrats may suddenly change

policies, and political opportunities may disappear. Even though the activities of social organizations have resulted in some liberal changes in the regime, democratization is not the inevitable outcome.

Furthermore, both perspectives hold a monolithic view of Chinese social organizations, which neglects the variations among them. As this research discovers, diversified modes of policy (non)influence exist in Chinese social organizations. Top-down organizations in the category of symbolic state corporatism have little policy influence and do not actively represent the interests of their constituencies. Passive state corporatist organizations only passively represent their constituencies' interests and participate in the policy process. Active state corporatist organizations possess significant policy influence, but their interest representation has limitations. They inherently cannot represent all the demands of all their constituencies, especially those conflicting with the state's interests or social and cultural context. Sometimes, it is difficult for them to find the actual demands of their constituencies because of their bureaucratic working style and overlong administrative chains. Some organizations' limitations are more severe than those of others. The state always controls top-down organizations and has tightened its grip recently. Although some of them play essential roles in the policy process and connect the grassroots with the government, they prioritize the state's interests and can hardly serve as vehicles for democratization. Regarding bottom-up organizations, those in the category of silent pluralism stay away from the policy arena and do not actively represent the interests of their constituencies. Organizations adopting embedded pluralism or critical pluralism serve as the primary force to push political development forward gradually. Nevertheless, this research finds that their influence on policy outcomes is moderate, and their quantity has decreased thanks to the more restrictive political environment in the Xi era.

However, painting an overly pessimistic picture of all Chinese social organizations neither reflects China's reality. Many Chinese social organizations have made significant progress in influencing public policies. Shapiro (2019, 120) comments that Chinese environmental organizations are now assuming advocacy roles similar to those adopted by environmental organizations in other parts of the world, which represents a maturing of environmental activism and indicates the increased confidence and willingness of these organizations to take on politically difficult issues. Dai and Spires (2017, 82) also note that many activities Chinese environmental NGOs engage in are similar to what environmental advocacy groups do in democracies. They not only contribute to a greater awareness of environmental problems but also broaden the civic engagement repertoire of average citizens (Dai and Spires 2017, 82-83). As this research shows, many organizations in other fields also actively engage in various policy activities. Guo and Saxton (2010) list 11 advocacy activities³ in their study of charitable nonprofit organizations in Arizona. This research finds that Chinese social organizations engaged in 10 of those activities, excluding voter registration and education. In their research on nearly 400 Seattle-based nonprofit organizations, Buffardi et al. (2017, 1237) list 12 advocacy activities.⁴ Except for placing opinion advertisements on TV, newspapers, or magazines, this research identifies 11 of these activities in Chinese social organizations.

In the Xi era, the space to influence policies is not completely closed, albeit compressed. As Sun (2023, 201) notes, after Xi Jinping took office, the trend of opening up halted, and regime-

³ These activities are research, media advocacy, direct lobbying, grassroots lobbying, public events and direct action, judicial advocacy, public education, coalition building, administrative lobbying, voter registration and education, and expert testimony.

⁴ These activities include attending meetings, contributing public comment, asking members to call or send letters/emails to the government, forming an alliance with other groups, providing expertise, seeking the involvement of influential local figures, providing information to the media, soliciting signatures, assisting in drafting bills, making statements at a press conference, placing opinion advertisements on TV, newspapers, or magazines, and engaging in direct action.

challenging actors diminished, but the administration did not revert to the totalitarian approach under Mao, and much of China's nonthreatening society continued to enjoy toleration by the state. Fu and Distelhorst (2017) argue that although the Xi administration tends to repress contentious participation, it leaves the institutions enabling grassroots participation untouched, such as petitions to political authorities, requests for disclosing government information, and filing administrative lawsuits. Fu (2019) notes that opportunities for legal advocacy still exist in the Xi era. While extra-legal mobilization and associated street activism are punished harshly, enforcing rules that protect social and economic rights has become more rigorous and consequential (Fu 2019, 27). Hsu (2021) examines four arenas of Chinese civil society that the "quality (suzhi)" ideology protects under the Xi regime: media-inspired public outrage, public protests and demonstrations, NGOs as state consultants, and the increased accessibility of litigation. Teets (2015b) and Teets et al. (2017) find that local policy innovations still exist under the Xi Jinping administration.

As this research discovers, the Xi administration is inclined to repress organizations adopting critical pluralism but relatively lenient to those embracing (reduced) embedded pluralism or silent pluralism. Embedded pluralist organizations run by cooperative professionals may have better opportunities to establish harmonious and stable relationships with governments and influence policies more effectively. Furthermore, in the field of environment that Xi Jinping prioritizes, the state tolerates most organizations adopting critical pluralism, and a few of them are thriving in exploring new approaches and achieving more policy influence. As long as Chinese social organizations do not challenge the top leadership of the Party-state and basic state policies and maintain acceptable policy influence modes to the state, they still enjoy some developmental space.

Many social organizations in China take action to defend the interests of their constituencies and influence public policies. In an authoritarian country like China, where democratic movements or radical political reforms are hazardous, pursuing public policy influence is an incremental but pragmatic way of expanding civil rights and cultivating social forces. Even though democratization is not the inevitable result, their endeavors have led to some liberal changes in the regime and benefited millions of Chinese people. Although dancing in chains, they bargain with the state and try to carve out more space and achieve more influence in the policy process. The pressing task is not to blame their wearing chains. Instead, what they need is to learn how to dance well in chains now and eventually cast off their chains in the future.

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Vita

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Education

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

Ph.D., Department of Political Science, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, August 2024.

Dissertation: Dancing in Chains: Policy Influence of Social Organizations in China

PEKING UNIVERSITY, CHINA

Master of Laws, June 2004

Bachelor of Economics, July 1998

Fields

Comparative Politics, Public Policy & Administration

Research Grants

2019 American Political Science Association Travel Grant

2012 American Political Science Association Travel Grant

2009-10 Doctoral Fellowship of the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange

2009-10 Graduate Student Public Scholarship Grant, awarded by the Graduate School of Syracuse University and the Graduate Student Organization

2009-10 and 2008-09 the Maxwell School Roscoe-Martin Fund for Research

2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 Maxwell Dean's summer research fellowships

2009 Travel Grant of the Department of Political Science at the Maxwell School

2008 Travel Grant of the Department of Political Science at the Maxwell School

2007-2008 Research Fellowship of the Institute for the Study of Judiciary, Politics, and the Media at Syracuse University

Publications

Honggang Tan and Luozhong Wang. 2012. "Policy Influence of Women's Organizations in China," *Women's Policy Journal of Harvard* Vol.9 (Spring 2012): 42-55.

Honggang Tan. 2007. "Dynamics of Policy Change in China: A Case Study of the Renewable Energy Law," *Chinese Public Administration Review* (Published by the National Center for Public Productivity, Rutgers University-Campus Newark) 4 (1/2): 57-71.

Conference Papers and Presentations

Honggang Tan, “Dancing in Chains: Policy Influence of Environmental Organizations in China,” presented at the iPoster session of the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association in Washington D.C. on August 30, 2019.

Honggang Tan, “Dancing in Chains: Policy Influence of Social Organizations in China,” presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association in Chicago on April 8, 2016.

Honggang Tan, “Policy Influence of Social Organizations in China: A Comparison of Women’s Organizations and Public Health Organizations,” presented at the Eighth Graduate Seminar on China organized by the Universities Service Center for China Studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and CUHK-Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation Asia-Pacific Centre for Chinese Studies, Hong Kong, January 4, 2012. It was also presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association in Chicago on April 12, 2012. The 2012 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association in New Orleans also accepted this paper, but the meeting was canceled due to inclement weather.

Hongying Wang and Honggang Tan, “Watch Dog Limited: Media Oversight of Judicial Affairs in China,” presented at the 2011 New England Association for Asian Studies Conference, Wellesley College, October 23, 2011.

Honggang Tan, “The State Advances as the Private Sector Retreats in the Economic Crisis: A Perspective of Interest Group Politics,” a presentation at the Economics Forum on the Prospects of China’s Macroeconomic Situations and the Capital Markets in 2010, organized by the School of Economics at Peking University, Beijing, January 9, 2010.

Honggang Tan, “Policy Influence of Women’s Organizations in China,” presented at the Annual Meeting of the Northeastern Political Science Association in Philadelphia on November 20, 2009.

Hongying Wang and Honggang Tan, “Chinese Media and the Judicial System under Soft Authoritarianism,” presented at the Annual Conference of the Association for Asian Studies in Atlanta on April 4, 2008. It was also presented at the IJPM colloquium at Syracuse University on April 10, 2008, and at the East Asia program of Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs at Syracuse University on March 20, 2008.

Teaching and Research Experience

Nov. 2008-Dec. 2008, Research Assistant of Prof. Brian Taylor, Research Topic: Russia’s State Capacity and Quality in Comparative Perspective

Jan. 2008-May 2008, Teaching Assistant, Interest Group Politics

Sep. 2007-Dec. 2007, Teaching Assistant, Comparative Government and Politics

Jan. 2007-May 2007, Teaching Assistant, Comparative Government and Politics

Sep. 2006-Dec. 2006, Teaching Assistant, Quantitative Skills in International Relations (a master-level course)

Jan. 2006-May 2006, Teaching Assistant, Inequality and American Politics

Sep. 2005-Dec. 2005, Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Quantitative Political Analysis (a master-level course)

Jan. 2005- May 2005, Teaching Assistant, Technology, Politics, and Environment.

Sep. 2004 – Dec. 2004, Research Assistant of Prof. Keith Bybee. Research Topics: “Transnational Citizenship;” “Homosexuality in U.S. Army”