Community-Based Social Service Delivery in China: Reshaped by Social Organisations?

Bingqin Li, Associate Professor, ANU
Lijie Fang, CASS, China
Jing Wang, CASS, China

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The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) is an autonomous research institute within the UN system that undertakes multidisciplinary research and policy analysis on the social dimensions of contemporary development issues. Through our work we aim to ensure that social equity, inclusion and justice are central to development thinking, policy and practice.
1. INTRODUCTION

A shift from a state and for-profit actor-centred to an NGO (called social organizations in China)-centred system of service delivery is taking place in China. The government is one of the key players in facilitating the emergence of this. The non-profit sector is, for the first time, officially recognised as a partner of the government in delivering social services and a new social contract between the state and labour, and more generally the state and citizens emerge in parallel with changes in the relationship between the state, private sectors, and non-governmental organizations (Howell, 2015). Given its impact on the existing social policy framework, in particular on the roles of key actors and the outcomes, the emergence of social organization centred system of service delivery is probably the most important change in social policy field in China now.

This country case study aims to identify and explain transformative potentials of this new form of service delivery at community level in the domains of governance of social policy and assess the impacts on social policy outcomes. With regard to its transformative potentials, the study focuses on various aspects of stakeholder relationships to answer the question of how the introduction of social organisations in social service delivery at community level has affected the existing governing structure and the forms and nature of interactions between actors, and the institutional outcomes of the changes in stakeholder relationships.

The case study will produce one synthesis report which summarises findings and key policy relevant messages, and two reports focusing on social policy sectors of community based primary care services and community services for migrant population. The research will be supported by the fieldwork in 9 neighbourhoods in three cities, namely Shanghai, Guiyang and Taicang in China.

2. BACKGROUND: MAJOR CHANGES IN THE SYSTEM OF SOCIAL SERVICE PROVISION

China’s social welfare system reform since the mid-1980s characterized as privatization and targeting was a result of the changes in economic system, in particular those changes affecting the state-sector and non-state sector employees, and labour market insiders and outsiders. These changes took place as China shifted from a planned economy to a market economy and from a closed economy to an open economy which tried to embrace globalisation. In this process, production-centred policy framework still shaped the nature of reform which embodied an emphasis on the welfare of employees and at the same time, taking advantage of the supply of cheap labour.

Since the late 2000s, the system of social service provision shifted its focus from employees to residents as the policy framework changed from production-centred to human-settlement-centred. The core purpose of the latter framework is to help people to settle down in a place where they decide to live. The main goal is to eliminate barriers to settle down in a new place, and to facilitate the integration of residents into a community. The major changes in the system of social service provision within the human-settlement-centred policy framework are: from selective to inclusive welfare entitlement; from employment based service provision to community based service provision.
From selective to inclusive welfare entitlement

The growing inclusiveness in the Chinese social policy is in essence an expansion of social citizenship from selected privileged labour groups to the wider population. The expansion of social citizenship was undertaken mainly through the improvement of access to social services, and the simplification of entitlement criteria and service delivery mechanisms.

The former includes: 1) the introduction of means-tested social assistance, such as minimum living standard guarantees and unemployment benefits to the unemployed people; 2) establishment of contribution-based social insurance for public sector employees first and then private sector employees (Zhang, 2014); 3) establishment of social insurance schemes in rural areas; 4) improvement of access to urban social benefits and services and of labour protection, social insurance schemes for migrants; 5) to extend social insurance to the self-employed (Li 2013).

The simplification process aimed to address the problems of the highly fragmented and complex antecedent social protection system which had a number of entitlement categories for different social groups based on place of origin, sector of employment, and place of access. The reform has aimed to move towards a unified system with variable parameters. Different settings of parameters to determine the eligibility and the level of benefits could allow the unified system to accommodate different social groups (Li 2014).

From employment-centred to community-centred service provision

Analysts on China tend to differentiate the welfare provision during the Central Planning era from the marketization era because of the economic transition. However, the real change in social service provision only took place recently.

In the Central Planning era, the welfare system was only a supplement to industrial production, in particular heavy industries (Yang & Cai 2003). Most social services were delivered or arranged through employers. Employers acted as gateways and sometimes providers of services – a system which supported the government’s strong control over employers and workers, in particular the mobility of workers. Underpinning the system was a policy consensus that minimising labour mobility would make it easier to reduce labour costs. This is particularly clear in the arrangement of social services such as housing, childcare, primary healthcare, training and education, which were organised so that it would be easier to manage workers and select talents (Zhang 1997; Li and Piachaud 2006).

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During the reform period, the nature of employment, as market transition started, became very different. Employees freely moved from state or collective enterprises to private ones. As the reform of state enterprises accelerated in the 1990s, large numbers of workers were made redundant. Expectations for lifetime employment were also gradually dismantled. Not only urban citizens started to move between jobs and cities, rural to urban migrants also came into cities to work and live. They were less loyal to the employers and the turnover rate was a lot higher than urban employees (Knight and Yueh 2004; Fan 2002).

As the regulations on job changes became relaxed, the fragmented system of social service provision in which employees’ welfare entitlement are not portable to other employers caused problems of social protection for employees and became the bottleneck in flexibilizing labour markets (Davis 1992; Lee 2000; Gu 2001; 1999; Croll 1999).

Welfare reforms in the 1990s and well into the 2000s were a set of efforts to accommodate the changing nature of employment by removing the barriers to labour mobility and reducing the financial and administrative burdens of employers. It helped employers to reduce the number of social services to their employees. Various in-kind benefits such as education and health became cash benefits or packaged into salaries. It indeed made it easier for employees to change jobs. More recent reforms centred on generating a social welfare finance system in which individuals are expected to make contributions to social insurance schemes not run by employers.

These changes represented a break away from the previous social service system anchored on employer provision. However, the reduction of employers’ responsibility for providing welfare and obligation to deliver social services was not compensated by the corresponding improvement of social service delivery by other actors. The state, out of efficiency considerations had already privatized important social services, such as in the housing, healthcare, a large part of education and burial services (Blumenthal & Hsiao, 2004; Mok, 1997).

Public or collectively provided services that are considered to be inefficient, such as rural education, rural social welfare institutions, childcare, are closed down (Han, 1999). Some of these services are picked up by the private sectors and some are not. The newly established service providers, be it public or private, charged fees. Even the public social service agencies were managed as profit making private companies.

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Skilled social workers were particularly lacking in poorer areas, and community level government agencies and their representatives in neighbourhoods or villages were primarily administrators to keep residential neighbourhoods in order, rather than service providers (Chu, 2015). As a consequence, the lower or even middle income groups would find it difficult to gain access to services.

**Community based service delivery and the emergence of SOs**

Against this background, the earlier reforms were primarily response to the social challenges of economic reform and globalisation. What really marks the paradigm shift is the introduction and expansion of community based service delivery, i.e. social services are provided according to where people live instead of where they work. In this sense, the services are centred on facilitating people to live as local residents. At the centre of what we labelled as a human settlement approach is to deliver benefits and services to the residents in communities.

Non-profit organisations did exist in the past. They were mostly registered as private enterprises as allowed by the state. The potentials of the non-profit organisations as service providers were increasingly recognised by the state. In March 2013, the Chinese Government decided to relax the tight control over social service providing NGOs and relabelled them as “social organisations”. Using social organisations to improve service provision has two aspects:

- New sources of funding. SOs would become a supplementary source of funding to state and private funding.
- New service providers. Professional SOs would become contractors of services funded by the state, or charity funds.

As a result of the relaxed regulation, by the end of 2014, the total number of SOs reached 547 thousands, 9.6% more than the previous year. More than 3000 charitable foundations were set up to support the operation of SOs. 6.37 million people were employed in these SOs. These changes, though still at the early stage, marked the beginning of some fundamental changes in the relationship between the state, the market, and NGOs in social service delivery. In the long run, SOs are expected to play a bigger role in service delivery.

As said earlier, there is a changing mode in the foci of service delivery from work place to residence based access. This means that neighbourhoods, either in the form of urban residential communities or in the form of rural villages would become central platforms of social service provision. Communities in this proposal are administratively defined spatial units in which social services are organised and delivered.

### 3. LITERATURE REVIEW: THE ROLE OF NGOS IN CHINA

There have been several sub-lines of studies regarding the role of NGOs in facilitating governance in the Chinese context.

**Democratisation perspective**

Mostly, NGOs in China had been portrayed as protesters, a representative of the civil society which fought against state’s intention to suppress democracy (Tang & Zhan,
According to this view, the thriving of NGOs are efforts to reverse the state’s effort to rid Chinese society of autonomous arenas of activity between 1950 and 1970s (Gold, 1990). Following this line of argument, NGOs aimed at the state’s interest in political control and maintaining Party authority. They strived to achieve democratisation. As Hsu (2015) commented, this is a rather narrow perspective. Civil society should not be treated as a synonym to political transition. NGOs played a much broader role in the development process in China.

**Social development perspective**

An encompassing framework would be the social development perspective in which political transition is part of the story. NGOs, including international NGOs, have played an important role in China’s poverty reduction and social service delivery to poor rural areas. NGOs are also actively engaged in the campaigning for increasingly diversified social needs for disadvantaged social groups. In this sense, NGOs can be importers of ideas from other countries, can be a reminder of the needs to the policy makers, or can be a channel of voice for the disadvantaged. Most of these works may not be in direct conflict with the governments’ agenda to maintain social stability and economic growth.

1. **NGOs function as champions of rights that need government legislation and enforcement to protect.** Before the NGOs started the campaign, the state failed to recognise these rights. The campaigns usually involve awareness building. It might be politically sensitive and face government control, depending on the attitude of the state towards the field covered, resulting in a different version of the same campaigns carried out by NGOs internationally (Ho, 2001; Stern & Hassid, 2012).

2. **NGOs provide services to people or groups who were left out or marginalised by the other stakeholders.** This line of work of NGOs has been supported or even funded by the state in China. The relaxation of the control of social organisations and the government service procurement therefore would lead to a quasi-market situation which is different from the bureaucratic style service provision and may be able to get into territories which the state has never been able to reach. For example, the numerous new social care services at the community level that are introduced by social organisations since last year did not even exist in the past, or the introduction of which had to overcome enormous administrative and political hurdle, partly because of the lack of trust between the civil society and the state and partly because of lacking in suitable institutional arrangement to allow NGOs to enter the “mainstream” of social service provision. In this sense, the much less tight control over NGOs in China in the field of social service provision can be a “win-win” situation. The relationship has been captured in two ways:

   a. **Corporatism relationship.** The state creates and maintains the relationship, and selects social organisations to mediate interests on behalf of their constituents to the state. The social organisations must adhere to the rules and regulations established by the state (Hsu & Hasmath, 2014).

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b. Partner relationship. The NGOs are considered to enjoy certain comparative advantages over the state, e.g. better understanding of the issues and the needs of the local communities. The state on the contrary may also function as a fund provider, regulator. Unlike the Corporatism framework, NGOs as partners do not only passively respond to state initiatives, but rather it also contributes to the definition of the relationship. What is more, as the local government does not necessary provide all the funding required by the NGOs, the latter may also take initiatives to modify the relationship. In this context, encouraging social organisations to take a more actively role in both the funding and service delivery would be in essence a partnership relationship. In the past several years, the decreasing trust in the officially arranged charity works had already resulted in poor support from the general public (Teets, 2009)\textsuperscript{15}. Therefore, mediation by NGOs can potentially revive the public interests in supporting these activities.

At the same time, it may also be too simplistic to capture the state-NGO relations in a single lens. For example, Howell (2015) examined the civil society and state relationship in the field of labour rights NGOs and suggests that the reform that combining relaxed government control and government service procurement had led to welfare incorporation in this field. The logic of maintaining social control and stabilise production would continue to hold. The policy change may still be a way to facilitate the existing development track. The corporatist logic might be useful to explain the policies in the production related fields. However, it may be difficult to explain the logic behind the expanded provision for non-productive population, for instance, the service to elderly people in residential communities.

3. \textit{Enabling civil society by improving awareness and increase public participation}. In many fields, public awareness was poor to begin with, for example, disability, sexuality, HIV/Aids, public health, environmental protection. To some extent, the lack of state interests is partly a result of poor public awareness, sometimes among the elites as well. Poor awareness can result in lower priority in the decision making process. NGOs’ ability to improve awareness can potentially modify the way the other stakeholders perceive the issues (Schwartz, 2004; Child, et al. 2007)\textsuperscript{16}. Without which, public participation would also be low. Awareness in some fields such as public health and environmental protection had also been promoted by the government even to this day. However, the forceful campaigns by the state often caused resentment or even cynical responses from the general public or even from the grassroots bureaucrats (Zhang and Li, 2011)\textsuperscript{17}. The cynical views would attribute all the efforts by the state to act for the sake of economic growth (Schwartz, 2004). Therefore, engaging NGOs to take on these tasks help to get people more actively involved.

\textsuperscript{17}Zhang, Y., & Li, B. (2011). Motivating service improvement with awards and competitions-hygienic city campaigns in China. Environment and urbanization, 23(1), 41-56.
4. RESEARCH DESIGN

Research aims and questions

The introduction of SOs in 2010 can be perceived as a turning point in the Chinese social policy reform. SOs are expected to undertake several roles in social development:

1. To supplement employers and local governments to allocate social services;
2. To provide funding for services targeting “non-local” service users;
3. To develop quasi-market competition to improve service quality and coverage.

We consider that community based social services are particularly relevant to satisfy the needs of local residents. Regardless of the diversity of SOs in China ranging from education and health care providers to migrant, women or HIV advocates, this paper will focus on social organisations that are based in residential communities. Moreover, the current changes have prominent gender-specific dimensions. For example, the provision of migrant children’s day care would allow migrant women to bring their children to cities and work full time without the support of extended families. Thus, the gender perspective will be taken into consideration throughout the report.

CORE QUESTION: How has the introduction of SOs to community social service delivery reshaped the system of social service provision in China?

Sub questions:

A) Has the introduction of SOs changed the relationship between the state and other stakeholders?

China is known to be trapped in the vicious cycle of: “Decentralisation leads to chaos. Centralisation causes suffocation”. However, to improve social citizenship, social services need to be equalized across the country through interprovincial redistribution – a difficult task without centralised revenues and fund allocation. As Li (2014) suggests, introduction of SOs may help to break through the local protectionism and improve migrants’ access to services.

A1) How has the relationship changed as a result of the introduction of social organization between different stakeholders according to the funding source, the types of services provided and the distribution of responsibilities among different providers? We will establish whether there are any real changes in the local state’s responsibility in the provision of social services and whether the state has taken on new roles as a result of the introduction of SOs.

A2) What is the added value of SOs in terms of quantitative content of social services? We will look at whether the introduction charity funds have led to expansion of existing services or addition of new services comparing to what was originally provided by the state or private sectors. We will also examine whether SO deliverers help to expand the existing services or add new services to the system.

A3) How have SOs reshaped the Central-local government relationship? We will examine 1) whether some SOs have been operating across administrative boundaries, such as across provincial boarders; 2) whether charity funds have travelled across provincial boundaries and whether their beneficiaries can be non-local residents; and 3) what is the relationship between these SOs and the local authorities.

18 Li, B. (2014) The non-governmental organisation-China’s new era of local service delivery and grassroots democracy, Advance, spring issue, access date: 2/12/2014
B) Has the introduction of SOs changed the relationship between users and service providers?

One of the goals of introducing SOs is to improve grassroots democracy by encouraging local people to participate in the decision-making of local affairs and to encourage users of social services to exercise consumer power. We will focus on user participation in the process of service delivery and examine the impact of introduction of SO on public awareness and the resulting behavioural changes in participating in community affairs.

B1) Are users actually involved in the decision making process and in what ways?
B2) How service quality is assessed and what are the factors that have been taken into account?
B3) Has the introduction of SOs made a difference in 1 and 2 and in what ways?
B4) Are there any other significant changes regarding community participation since the involvement of SOs? In what ways?

C) What is the actual impact of SOs on services at community level?

In this part of the research, we will examine the impact of SOs on services at community level on the following aspects:

C1) Types of services covered in a given community,
C2) Coverage of these services,
C3) Access to the services,
C4) User satisfaction or attitude towards the services.

Hypotheses

First, social organisations partially fill in the gap between state-market service provision and the changing social needs. The transition from a state dominated central planning economy to a largely privatised economy and China joining the world economic system through its Open Door Policies generated new social needs. The introduction of private services responded to some of these social needs via fee-based service charges, being however largely insufficient. Some of the gap has been filled in by NGOs registered as enterprises and international NGOs. However, their activities are under tight control. The official introduction of SOs based in communities would be able to fill in more this gap by providing location based services to local residents.

Second, introducing social organisations into social service provision may change the relationship between the state and the civil society. In the past, NGOs played an important role in making voices heard through public protests (Ho, 2001; Le Mons Walker, 2006; O’Brien, 2009), but what is NGOs relationship with the state and in their new role as social service providers? We hypothesise that some social organisations may shift their working focus from voice making to policy implementation because the state becomes their major sources of funding, as previously identified by Howell (2015). At the same time, because the funding is often user satisfaction-based, SOs would try to satisfy user needs, opening a new voice channel. Additionally, social organisations could inspire expression of social needs and social participation. Partly because the state has dominated social provision and partly because

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the civil society used to be discouraged by the state for decades, the complaints tend to be directed toward the government, even when solutions could be found in self-help or civil society initiatives without state involvement.

Third, the encouragement of domestic social organisations as service providers may also affect the way social service provision is funded. In the past, NGOs in China received funding from international donors. There were fewer channels for domestic donors to contribute funding from outside the government system. The reform to relax control of SOs in China also means more domestic fund-holders would be able to directly or indirectly, through charity fund-holders, fund SOs. This change may have an impact on alternative fund-holders, including the international ones. These impacts can be either positive or negative. In this research, we will examine more closely, at the community level, what is the emerging pattern of SO fund provision.

Fourth, community based social services provided by NGOs may affect the coverage and catchment area of service providers. Access to social security through community registration is a persisting issue in accessing social services. People living in a neighbourhood outside of the area they have registered to could not receive services even when they are citizens in the same district or the same city. The introduction of community based social organisations may redefine service entitlement through offering new services, improving service coverage and redrawing the boundaries of service providers’ catchment areas. For example, the introduction of community kitchen in some communities in Shanghai triggered demand for better quality food with more variety, and some service providers decided to allow users to travel between different canteens in nearby neighbourhoods in order to provide this variety.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research will be a country case study with 9 community level case studies from three cities. Given the focus of this study, the governance of the complex service delivery at community level, a mixed research method will be used: primarily qualitative analyses and supportive quantitative analyses.

Data sources and collection

1. Government documents in different social policy areas to pin down the actual changes in relation to the introduction of SOs in the relevant policy fields.
2. Official statistics on national and provincial level for information on social services, local social-economic background and on service availability, affordability and usage.
3. In-depth interviews with city and district officials (including the Bureau of Civil Affairs at city and district level) in 9 communities in three cities. We will include discussions with community leaders, service providers and in-depth interviews with users.

Selection of policy fields: Community-based primary care and migration

Traditional family care in China relies heavily on intergenerational support. Parents look after their children who are expected to take care of the older parents. This system was broken down during the Central Planning era by socialisation of family care, but by the economic reform the social care system was dismantled. New, heavy challenges are imposed by the aging of the population. At the end of 2013, 14.9% of the Chinese population (202 million) was over 60 years’ old. By 2044, the proportion will grow to
30%, equivalent to 400+ million. The scale and speed of population ageing has been one of the fastest in the region and probably in the world (Table 1), happening before China becomes a high income country (Table 2). The pressure has exceeded expectations of the Chinese government, and so far China is yet prepared to respond to the trend (Chomik and Piggott, 2013). 

Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Older population/total population</th>
<th>Years to double</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1864</td>
<td>1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>1887</td>
<td>1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1927</td>
<td>1988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>1929</td>
<td>1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>1932</td>
<td>1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>1942</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UN website

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country and regions, 2012</th>
<th>Life expectancy</th>
<th>Healthy life expectancy</th>
<th>60+</th>
<th>GDP per capita, USD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low income</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower middle income</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper middle income</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>10298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High income</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>38562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>36300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>30970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>9040</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WHO website

The impact of aging is amplified by shrinking family sizes eroding the informal support system (Zhang and Goza, 2006; Hesketh, et al. 2005; Flaherty, et al., 2007). Owing to the One Child Policy, the number of household members was reduced from 4.41 to 3.16 between 1982 and 2008, being even smaller in large cities as Beijing (less than 2.6 in 2008 (Li, 2013)).

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22 Li, B. (2013) How successful are China’s public housing schemes?, in Litao Zhao, ed. China’s Social Development and Policy: Into the Next Stage, Publisher: London: Routledge, pp.115-140.
Migration: Difficulties in responding to the needs of a more mobile population. China has seen various migrant groups in the last years, accessing social services to differing levels:

a. Rural-urban migration. 236 million people, one in six Chinese, lived outside their place of origin in 2012 (PRC Ministry of Health and Family Planning, 2013) \(^{23}\), among which around 200 people were of rural origin. Urban population has been growing at a rate of higher than 5% per year during 1985-1990 and at 3-4 percent per year since 1990, faster than in Asia or the world (United Nations, 2014). \(^{24}\)

b. Highly skilled migrants. Migrating skilled talents, considered important by local governments, are granted special treatment and accepted as local citizens without much difficulty.

c. New school and university graduates. Young people who have not yet gained much work experience migrate for jobs in the cities, but often find it difficult to afford housing in metropolitans such as Beijing and Shanghai. They live in peri-urban areas, or rent in shared accommodations in urban neighbourhoods (Woronov, 2011) \(^{25}\).

The growing population mobility challenges the old social service system which allocates funds and delivers services according to the population registration, the Household Registration. Firstly, migrants, unless officially recognised by changing the household registration record, find it difficult to gain access to social services. The government has put great effort into including migrant population in the social insurance schemes, so that they could contribute to the social protection system in a similar fashion to the urban population. This is acceptable only when the entitlement is in the form of cash benefits or allows equal access to the services (e.g. insurance against industrial accident), otherwise migrants are not willing to contribute. Secondly, migration has made social service delivery in rural area more difficult. As more young people move to cities, rural villages have to face up to deteriorating services. This is partly a result of the state planners’ pursuit of higher service efficiency by closing down services considered to have fewer users in rural areas (Li and Piachaud, 2004).

We also selected policy areas that have great relevance to the impact of globalisation. The changing nature of the Chinese labour market and migration pattern are outcomes of the country’s economic reform and integration into the global market. At the same time, the greater mobility of the population plus the changing lifestyle, which increasingly shifts towards core family structure, have generated major challenges in facilitating human settlement and care provision. In this sense, the impact of globalisation and the interaction between global and local actors and values is an intrinsic part of this research.

Selection of fieldwork sites

Communities in China vary greatly. For the purpose of this research, we selected nine communities in three cities. The selection of these communities is out of several considerations: 1) to obtain a range of communities from well-established to newly built; 2) to select communities from both better developed and poorer regions; 3) to select communities facing the two main challenges discussed in the area: aging and urbanisation.


1. **Shanghai**: two will be from inner city districts (Xuhui, Yangpu) and one peri-urban district (Jiuting Community). Shanghai is a mega-city that has suffered from serious aging issues, whilst being a major immigration destination. It is known to be friendly to highly skilled but exclusive to rural-urban migrant workers. Also, in all the three neighbourhoods selected, some level of social tension persists between the local and the migrant population, in particular the poorer migrants. Thus, Shanghai provides particularly rich information regarding the aging and migration challenges combined.

2. **Taicang**: two urbanised rural communities (Changfeng Community, Chengxiang Town) and one mixed community (Weiyang Community). Taicang is experiencing fast urbanisation which challenges the existing social structure and services delivery. Changfeng is a pilot for China’s urbanisation policy. The original rural communities where Changfeng locates have been turned into a new city called Kejiaoxincheng and the national pilot scheme for social development artificially introduced SOs. Researchers from CASS have been following the changes in the public awareness and attitudes on SO service delivery. Chengxiang Town does not have SO involvement and the limited services are provided by the government directly. We will select one of the two villages turned into urban communities in Chengxiang Town. Weiyang hosts more than 10,000 migrants, a number much higher than the one of local population, with prominent integration and old age care service challenges.

3. **Guiyang**: one newly built community (Xinshijicheng community), one peri-urban community (Longjing community) and one rural community (Luwo community). Despite of its recently ignited fast economic growth, Guizhou province remains one of the poorest in China. Xinshijicheng is an artificially developed new urban community.
Table 1: Fieldwork sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shanghai</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiuting Town, Songjiang District</td>
<td>Households: 12367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Permanent residents: 34024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Migrant workers: 118816</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                                | International migrants: 3266  | 32.92 sq.km
| Shanghai                       |            |
| Pingliang Road, Yangpu District | Households: 41,000  |
|                                | Permanent residents: 115,000  | 3.41 sq. km
| Xujiahui, Xuhui District       | Households: 31,624  |
|                                | Permanent residents: 94,872  | 4.04 sq. km
| Taicang                        |            |
| Changfeng Community, Kejiaoxincheng | Kejiaoxincheng population: 26,354  |
|                                | Permanent residents: 19,224  | 12 sq. km.
| Chengxiang Town (need to decide among two communities) | 380,000 (the whole town) |
|                                | 150,000 local residents  |
|                                | 230,000 non-locals  | 126 sq. km (the whole town)
| Guiyang                        |            |
| Xinshijicheng                  | Households: 40,000  |
|                                | Residents: 120,000  | 6 sq. km.
| Luwo village                   | Households: 592  |
|                                | Villagers 2123  |
|                                | Out-migrants: 386  | 7.93 sq. km
| Longjing community             | Permanent residents: 1516  |
|                                | Households: 410  | 5 sq. m.

Research outputs

The three part analytical framework will be used to produce one main report and two sub-reports for two policy areas.

The main report will provide an overview of all social services provided within each community. In this report, “community” is administratively defined. They are a platform where stakeholders, such as fund holders, service providers and users, work together to deliver and use social services. The services can have different types, including home based services, community based services and virtual services.

In the two sub-policy areas, we will examine primary care provision for all urban residents and services targeting migrant population. As discussed earlier, the two types of social services are to some extent responses to the main challenges in the Chinese society: the breaking down of the family care tradition and the inability to respond to the need of an increasingly mobile population. We will examine how, at the community level, the services are provided and in what ways the introduction of SO affected the outcomes of the service delivery.

Development of community-based service provisions

Community based services have been championed by the Ministry of Civil Affairs since 1986. But the idea about social services in the early stage was primarily on satisfying urban citizens’ demand for services as they started to buy houses in the private market. These services used to be provided by employers in the employee housing complex. As people bought houses in the newly built private communities, there was not even paid services. However, local people needed these services, such as estate management, housing maintenance, setting up convenient stores, garbage collections, etc. Gradually, new estate planning was introduced to make sure that there should be room for private services to be introduced into the newly built communities after a housing estate is completed. At the same time, the Neighbourhood Committees, the grassroots government agencies, were also introduced to the new neighbourhoods. Similar to the
old system, they mainly focused on community level public administration, which would mostly be about collaborating with local policy or organising volunteers to maintain public security and social control. They were not social service deliverers. As a result, even to this day, when one walks into an urban neighbourhood, he/she may not be able to find neighbourhood based services.

Major development of community based services started from 2007 when the Ministry of Civil Affairs produced a national level Community Service System Development Plan (Ministry of Civil Affairs, PRC, 2007). Before this, there were some pilot schemes in different parts of the country. The 2007 regulation means that the government will fully endorse the idea of developing a community service system. However, this does not mean that community services are accessible to all urban residents. The Household Registration System (Hukou) which has been considered the last barrier to free labour mobility in China determined that only urban citizens could have access to these services. This last hurdle was demolished. In July 2014, Hukou registration was replaced by a resident ID which would not differentiate the places of origin of local residents. This means that once a person becomes a long citizen, they would be able to use the services available in the neighbourhood they settle down. In this sense, the services are delivered to enable the settled residents.

26 Ministry of Civil Affairs, PRC, 2007), “Community service system development plan, 2006-2010”, (Shìyìwù” shèqū fúwù tǐxì fāzhǎn guīhuà), accessed 07/01/2015