

Overview of NGO Strategies and Practices in Addressing Global Challenges

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Abstract. Against the backdrop of growing global challenges, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are emerging and playing an important role. This paper examines in depth the strategies and practices of NGOs in addressing global challenges. Firstly, the background of the rise of NGOs and the purpose of the study are explained, followed by an analysis of the concept and characteristics of NGOs, including definition, main features and types. It then discusses the strategies of NGOs in addressing global challenges, such as the use of information tools and the implementation of cooperation strategies. The practice of NGOs in global ocean governance and global environmental governance is then described. The roles and challenges of NGOs are also analysed, including their involvement in public crises and their position in global crisis governance, while internal and external challenges faced by NGOs are identified. Finally, the conclusions of the study are summarised and an outlook is given on future research directions, including strengthening the capacity building of NGOs, expanding areas of cooperation, deepening policy influence and exploring innovative development.

Keywords: Non-governmental organisations; global challenges; strategy; practice.

1. Introduction

In today's era of globalisation and increasing challenges, NGOs have emerged and are growing. The world is faced with many complex challenges, such as environmental degradation, poverty and humanitarian crises, and traditional governments and corporations sometimes have limitations in dealing with these problems. Against this background, NGOs have gradually become an indispensable force in global governance with their unique advantages and roles. The purpose of this paper is to explore in-depth the strategies and practices of NGOs in addressing global challenges, analyse their specific actions and strategies in different fields, summarize their successful experiences and problems, provide theoretical support and practical guidance for NGOs to better play their roles, and at the same time provide new ideas and ways for the world to jointly address the challenges.

2. Concepts and Characteristics of NGOs

2.1. Definition of NGOs

The academic definition of NGOs is diverse, some scholars believe that it is an institutional space between the government and private enterprises, and is a general term for institutions that are neither governmental units nor general private enterprises; some scholars define it as a general term for independent civil organisations that do not operate for profit and mainly carry out public welfare or mutual-beneficial social service activities, and it is also regarded as a social institution or organisation initiated by private individuals to realise non-economic aspirations or goals. It is also regarded as a social institution or organisation initiated by private individuals to achieve non-economic aspirations or goals, such as the United States, where churches are also classified as such, and is generally referred to as a civil organisation by Chinese officials. NGOs have a number of key features: public interest, which enables them to provide public goods for society on a non-profit basis, complementing the failures of the government and the market; autonomy, which means that under the constraints of the law and the public system, their members provide services on a voluntary basis, with a high degree of self-governance; non-government, which enables them to provide services independently of the government and to compete with the market; organisational, which eliminates the deficiencies of

individual behaviours; and non-political, which means that they do not participate in political activities, and can operate in a relaxed and competitive environment[1]. non-political so that it does not participate in political activities and provides public welfare activities in a relaxed environment; non-religious so that it distinguishes itself from religious activities, specialising in the provision of public goods and services for the community, without religious beliefs. Together, these characteristics have shaped the unique position and role of NGOs in the context of global challenges.



Figure 1. Definition of NGOs

2.2. Types of NGOs

NGOs can be classified according to their legal status and field of activity. Legal status can be divided into statutory NGOs, such as large charitable foundations, which are registered in accordance with the law and are subject to a strict system for carrying out their activities and managing their funds; grass-roots NGOs, which are formed by private individuals on their own initiative and have no formal legal status but are strong in their actions, such as community environmental protection groups; and quasi-non-governmental organisations (quasi-NGOs), which are somewhere in between, and which may collaborate with the government or formal organisations in order to obtain resources. In the area of environmental protection, there are organisations such as the China Environmental Protection Foundation (CEPF), which researches and argues for environmental policies, monitors the government's responsibilities, and carries out publicity campaigns; in the area of poverty alleviation and development, there are organisations such as the China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation and Development (CFPAAD), which provides support to impoverished areas; in the area of public welfare, there is the China Youth Foundation (CYF); in the area of charity and relief, there is the China Charity Federation (CCF); in the area of the protection of rights and interests of the vulnerable, there is the China VFF Foundation; Chinese Community Health Association for Community Development; Chinese Football Association. In addition, the economic field is one of the main areas in which foreign NGOs operate in China, with education, disaster relief, health and environmental protection also accounting for a large proportion of their activities.

3. NGO Strategies to Address Global Challenges

3.1. Use of information tools

3.1.1. Provision of information for decision-making

The provision of new information to policymakers is crucial for the participation of NGOs in global governance. As important participatory actors in global governance activities, international NGOs mainly provide policymakers with more credible and relatively new information. This information, in the form of policy solutions and expert advice, transforms technical information into political discourse, thereby influencing political processes and outcomes. For example, on the issue of global climate change, some NGOs provide governments and international organisations with scientifically accurate information by collecting and analysing climate data from various locations, helping them to develop more effective response strategies. The information provided by NGOs can

make up for the lack of information provided by governments and enterprises in certain areas and provide a more comprehensive basis for decision-making[2]. At the same time, the professionalism and independence of NGOs also make the information they provide more credible and help promote scientific and democratic decision-making.

3.1.2. Information dissemination and impact

Information dissemination plays an important role in global governance. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) can be described as the most active current disseminators of information on ocean governance, combining their experience in conservation, photography and communications with the latest digital and social technologies, and harnessing the power of the media, communities and storytelling to lead public participation in ocean governance. In international public opinion, the substance of what NGOs instil through their means of communication, whether true or not, objectively steers international public opinion in favour of NGO expectations. For example, in the area of wildlife protection, NGOs have disseminated through various channels the existential crisis faced by wildlife, arousing global public concern and attention, and pushing governments to adopt stricter protection measures. In addition, through information dissemination, NGOs have also raised public awareness and understanding of global challenges, stimulated public participation, formed a broad social consensus and created a favourable social environment for global governance. At the same time, information dissemination also helps NGOs to communicate and cooperate with other actors and jointly promote the process of global governance.

3.2. Implementation of the co-operation strategy

3.2.1. "Insider" strategies

NGOs participate in global governance as "insiders" by cooperating with governments and international organisations. By cooperating with governments, NGOs can give full play to their respective strengths and work together to address global challenges. For example, in the field of environmental protection, NGOs can provide governments with professional technical support and scientific advice to help them formulate more scientific and reasonable environmental policies. At the same time, the government can also provide NGOs with financial support and policy guarantees to facilitate the development and growth of NGOs.

By cooperating with international organisations, NGOs are able to consolidate resources on a global scale and jointly promote the process of global governance. For example, in the global fight against the epidemic, NGOs have worked closely with international organisations such as the World Health Organisation, providing a great deal of material assistance and technical support for the global fight against the epidemic[3]. In addition, NGOs can provide more civil voices and wisdom for global governance by participating in the decision-making process of international organisations.

3.2.2. The "outsider" strategy

As "outsiders", NGOs can exert pressure on governments and international organisations to promote the process of global governance. When governments and international organisations fail to act or act improperly in dealing with global challenges, NGOs can exert pressure on them through public opinion monitoring, protests and demonstrations, and urge them to take more active and effective measures. For example, on the issue of climate change, some NGOs have put pressure on governments to adopt stricter measures to reduce emissions by organising large-scale protests.

In addition, NGOs can act as independent watchdogs, monitoring and evaluating the behaviour of governments and international organisations. Since NGOs have independent sources of funding and expertise and are not bound by national interests, their monitoring and assessment results are more objective and impartial. For example, in global human rights governance, some NGOs monitor and evaluate the human rights situation of governments, providing an important reference basis for global human rights governance.

4. NGO Practices in Global Challenges

4.1. Practice in global ocean governance

4.1.1. Direct path

(1) Promotion of rule-making policies

Although NGOs have not achieved the same "formal status" as States under international law, and cannot influence the outcome of global ocean governance "legislation" by being "for" or "against" it, they are not excluded from the international law-making process. Although NGOs have not achieved the same "formal status" as States in international law and cannot influence the outcome of global ocean governance by "favouring" or "opposing" "legislation", they have not been excluded from the international law-making process. On the contrary, NGOs have been able to establish long-term collaborative relationships with some States or international organisations, or have become powerful "pressurers", influencing the direction of global ocean governance rules and policies. In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the number of NGOs granted observer or consultative status in intergovernmental organisations, including United Nations agencies, and they have long been regular visitors to international conferences[4]. The ample prior scientific research of NGOs gives their views a prominent "authority" in rule- and policy-making processes.

(2) Participation in the implementation of ocean governance

Non-governmental organisations translate their vision into reality by taking on specific tasks in the global ocean governance process. In cooperation with or under the authority of governments and international organisations, NGOs have become the actual operators of ocean governance projects in a significant proportion of ocean areas, and can choose marine ecological protection and restoration measures they deem appropriate within their mandate and competence. Collaborative or independent regional stewardship has become one of the key ways in which NGOs influence the global ocean governance process, and over time this practice has reinforced their position in global ocean governance by cyclically increasing the reliance of States and international organisations on the participation and intellectual contributions of NGOs.

(3) Overseeing the achievement of governance objectives

The status of NGOs as neutral watchdogs is now widely recognised as an important way for States and international organisations to enhance their reputation and demonstrate transparency in policy formulation and implementation. However, some NGOs are not impartial in their watchdog function, but tend to bypass their own stakeholders, express their views and actions selectively, and even deliberately "discredit" some countries.

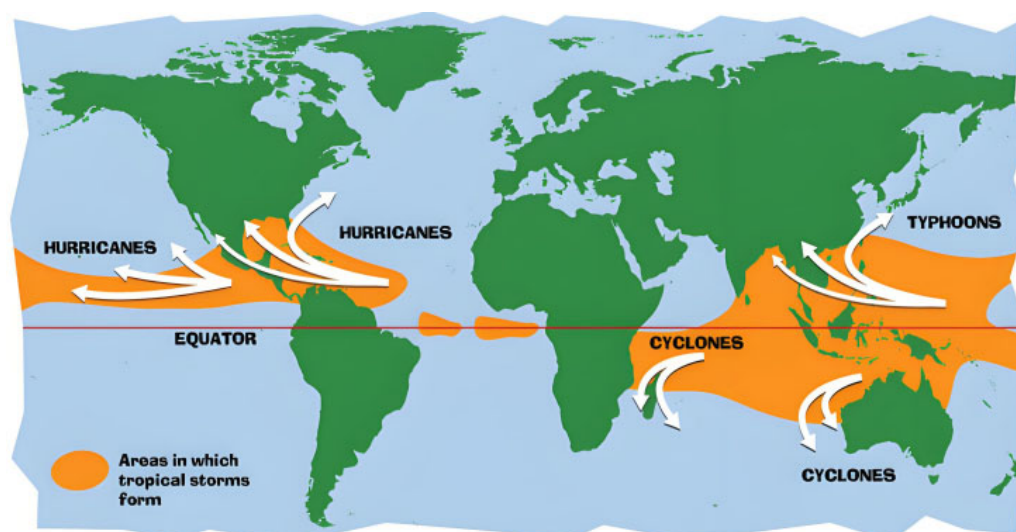


Figure 2. Practice in global ocean governance

4.1.2. Indirect paths

(1) Steering International Public Opinion

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs), which to some extent shape the way the public, dignitaries and even officials of international organisations around the world perceive marine ecological issues, are currently the most active disseminators of information on ocean governance. They combine their experience in conservation, photography and communications with the latest digital and social technologies, harnessing the power of media, community and storytelling to lead public engagement in ocean governance. NGOs are more radical in setting out their goals and promoting their programmes, and have greater influence and convening power, objectively guiding international public opinion in favour of NGO expectations.

(2) Construction of "expert" status

NGOs play the role of "creators and editors of scientific, policy and economic knowledge" in the global governance of the oceans and seas, and by linking and coordinating their work across regions and disciplines, they have constructed for themselves the status of authoritative "experts". On the one hand, NGOs undertake a great deal of research and accumulate data and experience in their management practices, which builds up their expertise on specific issues; on the other hand, NGOs have very close links with the academic community, and this intellectual superiority has led to the formation of long-term collaborative relationships and even reliance on them by national and international organisations in relation to ocean governance issues.

4.2. Practice in global environmental governance

4.2.1. Transnational impacts

Transnational environmental NGOs, such as WWF, have extensive influence in global environmental governance. On the one hand, they have a positive impact on the international system, international rules and international environmental law. By carrying out a great deal of research work and practical activities, transnational environmental NGOs provide a scientific basis and professional advice for the formulation of international environmental policies. For example, the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) conducts in-depth research on wildlife conservation, ecosystem restoration and other issues on a global scale, and its research results provide important references for the formulation of relevant policies by national governments and international organisations.

At the same time, transnational environmental non-governmental organisations (NGOs) play an important role in promoting the development of international environmental law. They promote the improvement and implementation of international environmental law by participating in international environmental negotiations and monitoring the fulfilment of environmental commitments by countries. For example, in the global climate change negotiations, NGOs such as the World Wide Fund for Nature have contributed to the fight against climate change by actively pushing countries to reach emission reduction targets.

However, transnational environmental NGOs also have certain limitations. Firstly, the instability of funding sources may affect the sustainability and impact of their activities. Most transnational NGOs rely on donations and grants, and their activities may be limited in the event of funding problems. Secondly, there are differences in the influence of TNEs in different countries and regions, which may lead to unbalanced distribution of resources[5]. In some developed countries, TNEs are more active, while in some developing countries, their influence is relatively small. In addition, transnational environmental NGOs may also face coordination difficulties and conflicts of interest when cooperating with Governments and international organisations.

4.2.2. Implications for our country

The conservation model of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) is an important inspiration for China's environmental protection system. China can learn from its experience in scientific research, strengthen its research on environmental issues and provide a scientific basis for the formulation of environmental policies. For example, China can increase its investment in research in

such areas as ecosystem protection and climate change response, and improve its research level in the field of environmental science.

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) is worth learning from our country in terms of public participation. By carrying out various forms of publicity and education activities, the transnational environmental NGOs have raised public awareness of and concern for environmental issues and stimulated the public's enthusiasm to participate in environmental protection. China can strengthen environmental education, raise public awareness of environmental protection and encourage the public to actively participate in environmental protection actions.

In addition, the WWF's mode of co-operation with the Government and enterprises also offers lessons for our country. In environmental protection, the Government, enterprises and NGOs can give full play to their respective strengths and jointly promote environmental governance. Our country can strengthen the co-operation among the government, enterprises and NGOs to form a synergy and jointly tackle environmental challenges.

5. Role and Challenges of NGOs

5.1. Role of NGOs

5.1.1. Participation in public crises

NGOs have multiple advantages in public crisis management. NGOs are flexible, and in disaster emergency management, where the governmental hierarchy may affect the speed and efficiency of information dissemination, NGOs are able to respond quickly to crises, arriving at the scene in the first instance to provide emergency assistance to the affected people. For example, in the aftermath of natural disasters such as earthquakes, many NGOs are able to quickly organise volunteers and collect materials that can be transported to the affected areas in time to provide food, drinking water, tents and other necessities to the affected people.

Non-governmental organisations are professional in nature, and the vast majority of them are established with a clear objective of focusing on a particular type of social problem or helping a vulnerable group, and set criteria for recruiting members based on that objective. This specialisation can play an important role in public crises. For example, in the case of an epidemic outbreak, health NGOs are able to provide medical assistance and psychological counselling to those affected by the disaster, thanks to their professional medical knowledge and skills.

NGOs also have the advantage of being close to the grassroots, and they are able to gain an in-depth understanding of the actual needs of the people affected by disasters and provide more personalised assistance. In disaster emergency management, NGOs can establish close contact with the affected people, understand their difficulties and needs, and provide important references for the government's relief work.

5.1.2. Position in global crisis governance

NGOs also play an important role in global crisis management. At the precautionary stage before a crisis, NGOs can raise public awareness of the crisis and preventive consciousness through publicity and education activities. For example, on the issue of climate change, many NGOs have, through holding lectures and distributing publicity materials, educated the public about the knowledge and impact of climate change and called on people to take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

At the decision-making stage when a crisis strikes, NGOs can provide professional advice and information to governments and international organisations to help them formulate more scientific and rational coping strategies. For example, when the global financial crisis broke out, economists and financial experts from a number of NGOs provided governments with policy advice on how to deal with the crisis.

In the relief phase of a crisis, NGOs can quickly organise resources to provide emergency assistance to the affected areas. For example, in the case of international humanitarian relief, NGOs

can provide food, drinking water, medical assistance and other basic necessities for the affected people.

In the post-crisis reconstruction and rehabilitation phase, NGOs can help the affected areas to restore the order of production and life and promote sustainable economic and social development. For example, in post-earthquake reconstruction, NGOs can provide technical support and financial assistance to the affected areas to help them rebuild their homes.

5.2. Challenges faced by NGOs

5.2.1. Internal issues

Inadequate human resource management is one of the major internal problems faced by NGOs. The human resources of NGOs consist mainly of daily staff and volunteers. However, due to their limited funds, NGOs often find it difficult to offer competitive remuneration packages, making it difficult to attract and retain professional talents. According to statistics, there is a high turnover rate of professional talents among NGOs in China, which seriously affects the efficiency of NGOs and the quality of their services. In addition, the lack of volunteers is also an obstacle to the development of NGOs. Generally speaking, the size of NGO volunteers is directly proportional to the level of economic development of a society, and it is also related to the image of NGOs themselves. Only if NGOs actively play their role in society can they attract more volunteers to participate in public welfare as their economy develops.

Poor internal governance is also one of the challenges faced by NGOs. Some NGOs suffer from deficiencies such as lack of autonomy and non-transparent operations, which seriously discourage public participation in them, thus creating a vicious circle in the development of NGOs. For example, the lack of transparency in the use of funds by some NGOs and the public's misgivings about the flow of funds make it difficult for NGOs to raise funds.

5.2.2. External challenges

On the one hand, the phenomenon of "governmentalisation" is one of the external challenges facing NGOs. In some countries and regions, the relationship between NGOs and the government is too close, resulting in a certain loss of independence and autonomy for NGOs. For example, some NGOs are overly dependent on the Government for funding, and the content and direction of their activities are influenced by the Government, which makes it difficult for NGOs to fully play their proper role in carrying out their work.

On the other hand, the phenomenon of "monopoly" also poses a challenge to NGOs. In some areas, the dominance of a few large NGOs can lead to an uneven distribution of resources, making it difficult for small NGOs to gain access to development opportunities. For example, in the field of international humanitarian relief, some large NGOs have abundant resources and extensive influence, while small NGOs often face problems such as lack of funds and talent, making it difficult for them to play an important role in relief work.

6. Conclusions and Outlook

This paper provides an in-depth study of the strategies and practices of NGOs in addressing global challenges. The conclusions show that NGOs play an important role in global challenges, with strategies ranging from the use of information tools to the implementation of collaborative tactics. Practices cover a variety of areas, such as ocean governance and environmental governance. Characterised by public interest and autonomy, NGOs have unique advantages in public crisis management and global crisis governance, but they also face problems such as inadequate internal management and external challenges.

Looking ahead, the capacity building of NGOs should be further strengthened to enhance their professionalism and credibility. At the same time, the Government should strengthen cooperation with NGOs to jointly address global challenges. It is also necessary to improve relevant laws and

regulations to create a favourable institutional environment for the development of NGOs, so that they can play a better role in global governance and contribute more to solving the common problems faced by mankind.

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