

Rethinking Humanitarianism/Sino-Africa Relations in an Era of Rising Chinese Non-Governmental Organizations

Zhao Yingjie Ph. D

Centre of African Studies, Faculty of Theology, University of Copenhagen, Denmark
yzh@teol.ku.dk

Yang Guangsheng*

School of Humanities and Law, Zhejiang A & F University, Hangzhou, Zhejiang,
China

Research Academy for Rural Revitalization of Zhejiang, Zhejiang A & F University,
Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China

Participants in training or continuing education courses at the University of Zambia
gsyang@zafu.edu.cn

Abstract: The 21st century has seen the emergence and growth of Chinese Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). The current study utilizes a case study approach to examine the increasing role of Chinese NGOs, particularly the Chinese Foundation of Poverty Alleviation (CFPA), in Africa through a detailed analysis of their evolvement and engagements in humanitarian and development aid practices. The findings reveal that the rise of Chinese NGOs in Africa has a significant impact on both Sino-Africa relations and the international humanitarian system. The involvement of these organizations in humanitarian aid and development projects strengthens the mutual benefits and soft power of China in Africa, as it advances its goal of becoming a leading humanitarian power. Furthermore, the presence of growing Chinese NGOs is transforming the dynamics of the global humanitarian system through their engagement and collaboration with other African, Western, and UN organizations, contributing to new discourses and practices in aid and relief efforts.

Keywords: Chinese NGOs, CFPA, Humanitarianism, Sino-Africa Relations

1. INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, Chinese Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) are emerging and increasing in Africa. By 2020, there are 32 Chinese NGOs involved in more than 140 humanitarian and development aid projects across 37 African countries. This phenomenon of massive engagement in humanitarian and development aid by Chinese NGOs in Africa has not only aroused the attention of domestic scholars, but also caused many discussions among foreign scholars. Literature in China paying attention to China NGOs mainly focuses on the following three aspects: The first is to study the development path and cooperation mode of China NGOs going abroad and internationalization, and the factors restricting their

development abroad and the main measures promoting their internationalization (Huang, 2014; Liu, 2019; Lu, 2011; Xu & Qian, 2021; Yan, 2021; Yang, 2014). The second is to study how China NGOs serve the national will in the process of internationalization and play their role in the context of the national strategy of Belt and Road. Through this kind of research and analysis, it can be concluded that China's NGOs play a positive role in promoting public diplomacy, promoting public communication, helping enterprises achieve social responsibility, and promoting national soft power (Lo et al., 2019; Qiu & Liu, 2019; Shen, 2021; Xu & Qian, 2021; Zhu, 2020). The third kind of research focuses on the Chinese NGOs participation in Africa and analyzes the Chinese NGOs' participation in Africa from the perspectives of history, cause, function and discourse (Dong, 2020; Lai, 2013; Li, 2015; Long & Chen, 2013; Yang, 2017; Zhan, 2020; Zhao & Han, 2016). Xu and Xiao's research is a great inspiration for this article (Xu, 2021). They suggest that Chinese NGOs have upgraded their capabilities in humanitarian aid, that is, from exploring the path of internationalization for themselves, to formally participating in the UN humanitarian aid system by upgrading their capabilities and learning from international humanitarian experience, and then entering the fast lane of international practical operation. They also point out that, in addition to upgrading its capabilities, unleashing international political opportunities by the international community and attracting Chinese NGOs to the global humanitarian system are also crucial reasons. There are also some discussions among foreign scholars regarding the raising of Chinese NGOs in Africa and globally (Brenner, 2012), Hsu, Hildebrandt and Hasmath (Hasmath & Hsu, 2021; Hsu et al., 2016; Ketels, 2020). Their research reflects the influence of the emerging and increasing Chinese NGOs in Africa and globally from different perspectives. Brenner (2012)'s research is a discussion of the Chinese NGOs' role in Sino-Africa relations. He argues that Chinese NGOs emerging in Africa are because China's investments in Africa have been questioned and criticized by local African NGOs. In his opinion, the main aim of these Chinese NGOs is to meet the Chinese government's need to communicate with African local NGOs and enhance China's image in Africa. He found although Chinese NGOs have been involved in African countries, the support from the Chinese government is far less than its support to Chinese enterprises. He concludes that Chinese NGOs' role in Africa is limited. Hsu, Hildebrandt and Hasmath's article examine the expansion of Chinese NGOs in two African nations through the analysis of their overseas behavior (Hsu et al., 2016). They examine that Chinese NGOs' influence in Africa has grown

and their operations in Africa are closely linked to their development at home. But Chinese NGOs haven't yet made a substantial impact because of different recipient countries' internal politics and regulatory frameworks. Ketels's research mostly concerns the role of Chinese NGOs in China's foreign policy, particularly in China's national development strategy for the Belt and Road Initiative (Ketels, 2020). In her research, she argues that Chinese NGOs, on the one hand, engage with different actors and countries to participate in global governance and find ways to solve global problems; on the other hand, work as ambassadors to convey the concept of Chinese governance in countries along with the Belt and Road strategy. Hasmath and Hsu hold the view that Chinese NGOs must have values and norms that are different from those of Western NGOs, because they are growing and flourishing under an authoritative system (Hasmath & Hsu, 2021). They use five cases of Chinese-African People's Friendship Association, Beijing NGO Association for International Exchanges, China NGO Network for International Exchanges, China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation and China Youth Development Foundation for analysis and conclude that Chinese NGOs are already beginning to contribute to and legitimize global social processes that challenge and compete with pre-existing Western norms and rules of behavior for social organizations. With all the analyses above, I have found that both Chinese and foreign scholars agree that China's NGOs are rising and increasingly involved in humanitarian and development assistance in Africa and the rest of the world. Most Chinese scholars pay attention to the internationalization of China NGOs. Only a few scholars pay attention to China NGOs in Africa, especially the humanitarian role of NGOs in Africa. In contrast, foreign scholars, although not much research, the role of Chinese NGOs in Africa is very concerned and their understandings of the Chinese NGOs' impact on Africa and globally by foreign scholars are updated by years. It also confirms that the growth of Chinese NGOs has indeed had an impact on Sino-Africa relations and the current international humanitarian system. My research is to stand based on previous studies and systematically analyze the impact of Chinese NGOs, particularly their rising humanitarian role on China-Africa relations and the current humanitarian system through the case of CFPA.

This article proceeds as follows: First, by analyzing how Chinese NGOs evolved, emerged and developed in Africa, it summarizes the characteristics of Chinese NGOs' activities in Africa, including their geographical range and key projects. Then, highlights the case of CFPA, the most successful international NGOs, to introduce its

internationalization path and practices in Africa. Then, starting from the current humanitarian system and China-Africa relations, combined with the CFPFA case, we analyze the impact of Chinese NGOs on the current humanitarian system and China-Africa relations.

2. THE EVOLVEMENT OF CHINESE NGOS IN AFRICA

The participation of Chinese NGOs in China-Africa affairs has gone through three steps. First, there appeared the Chinese-African People's Friendship Organization (CAPFA), which was promoted and guided by the state to serve the policy towards Africa at that time. Then there appeared the Chinese NGOs Network for International Exchange (CNNIE), which was jointly established by non-governmental organizations specializing in international exchange and cooperation. These two organizations were established mainly to develop friendship and promote people-to-people exchanges and cooperation between China and Africa. However, with the emergence of new forms of Chinese humanitarian engagement in Africa, they assumed the responsibility for promoting the development of Chinese NGOs in Africa. At the same time, they both directly and indirectly participated in development assistance projects and humanitarian assistance projects themselves, showing the prominent characteristic of "half officials and half folk" or "both officials and folk"(Chen, 2003; Hasmath & Hsu, 2021). Driven by the intensification of globalization and China's domestic policy of "going out", NGOs in China began to enter Africa to carry out internationalization projects.

3. BEFORE NGOS: ORGANIZATIONS ARE DRIVEN BY THE STATE

CAPFA was founded in April 1960 on the initiative of 17 organizations including the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, All-China Federation of Trade Unions, All-China Youth Federation and All-China Women's Federation. The organization was originally specialized in people-to-people diplomacy, broadening links with selected African countries to consolidate diplomatic relations as well as links in non-governmental areas such as with NGOs. Since its founding in 1960, CAPFA has been actively involved in non-governmental activities to advance friendship with African countries. Thirty-three out of fifty-three African countries, including Burkina Faso, with whom China has not

established diplomatic relations, have organizations to facilitate friendly exchanges in a range of fields with China. Exchanges and cooperation among local authorities are an important part of China-Africa friendly exchanges, serving as an important channel to deepen an emotional bond between the two sides. The activities of the China-Africa Friendship Association in Africa have had three main aspects: visits by government officials to facilitate non-governmental involvement, friendly exchanges to boost economic activities, and cultural and art exchanges both to boost economic activities and to consolidate the friendship. The China-Africa Friendship Association in this period developed friendly relations with African countries and served to enhance official diplomacy in the form of people-to-people exchanges and friendship. At that time, social organizations within China were mainly promoted and formed by the state (Yan, 2021). Consequently, CAPFA's members were central government officials at the time when it was created, but today, two-thirds of its members come from non-governmental sectors including business, academic, and media (Brenner, 2012). Not only were there membership and staff changes, but at the same time, as Brenner has noted, "CAPFA is increasingly engaged as a philanthropic charity arm for Chinese private and state-owned enterprises that work in Africa". For instance, CAPFA now frequently lobbies Chinese enterprises for donations, for example to send eye surgeons to African countries to operate on cataracts and related diseases (Brenner, 2012).

4. LINKING TO AFRICA NGOS — CHINESE NGOS NETWORK FOR INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE (CNNIE)

We mentioned in the last chapter that CNNIE plays a role in coordinating the activities of Chinese social organizations in Africa. CNNIE is mainly composed of national NGOs and was established in October 2005 as a national non-profit civil society organization and is "chiefly a networking platform". It engages with NGOs and personages both home and abroad, to promote exchanges and cooperation between Chinese NGOs and their counterparts in the rest of the world, and to enhance people-to-people friendship. CNNIE's focus is not restricted to the African continent, however, most of its efforts are aimed at African NGOs (Brenner, 2012). To manage NGO involvement in Sino-African affairs on behalf of the Chinese leadership and liaise between Beijing and African NGOs, CNNIE organizes capacity-building seminars and

exchange programs for handpicked African NGOs and Chinese GONGOs (China NGO Network for International Exchange 2010). Among the many activities, the most important is the China-Africa Civic Forum organized by the organization. In 2011, under the initiative of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) and the Kenya NGO Coordination Committee, the first “China-Africa Civil Forum” was held in Nairobi, Kenya. The theme of the Forum was “Developing partnership and promoting China-Africa friendship”. More than 200 people from China and 19 African countries participated in the 2011 Forum, which resulted in the adoption of the Nairobi Declaration. CNNIE has also been active in public welfare and charity projects in African and Southeast Asian countries such as well-drilling, free cataract surgeries and classroom equipment donations through collaboration with local partners.

5. EMERGING HUMANITARIAN PLAYERS: CHINESE NGOS GO INTO AFRICA

Before Chinese NGOs launched their activities in Africa, Chinese NGOs mainly conducted cooperation with Africa through personnel exchanges (Yang, 2017). In 2006, China included Chinese NGOs in its first Policy on Africa, encouraging Chinese NGOs to participate in exchanges and cooperation in disaster relief and emergency humanitarian assistance. In 2015, in the second edition of China’s Policy on Africa, the Chinese government once again encouraged Chinese NGOs to exchange experiences and conduct pragmatic cooperation in poverty reduction in various forms. The aim was for them to share China’s successful experience in achieving large-scale rural poverty reduction through development, strengthen project demonstration cooperation, and support African countries to enhance their capacity for independent poverty reduction and development. Summarizing these two policy documents, we can see that in the 21st century, the Chinese government has gradually attached importance to the role of Chinese NGOs in humanitarian affairs, disaster reduction and prevention, and poverty alleviation, in addition to their role in developing friendship, developing non-governmental diplomacy, and strengthening exchanges and cooperation. Government policy support is a prerequisite for Chinese NGOs to move into Africa. Starting in 2010, more foundations began to develop overseas projects (Deng, 2019). Dr. Ying Wang, a PhD fellow of Leiden University, set up a Chinese NGOs

Internationalization Database in 2020 (Chinese NGOs Internationalization Database), which tracks more than 100 Chinese NGOs involved in international donations or aid projects across more than 100 countries. Among them are 37 African countries. Based on the database, we analyzed that Chinese NGOs in Africa are especially active in East African countries (see Table 1). For example, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Sudan are the countries with the most Chinese NGOs' aid programs.

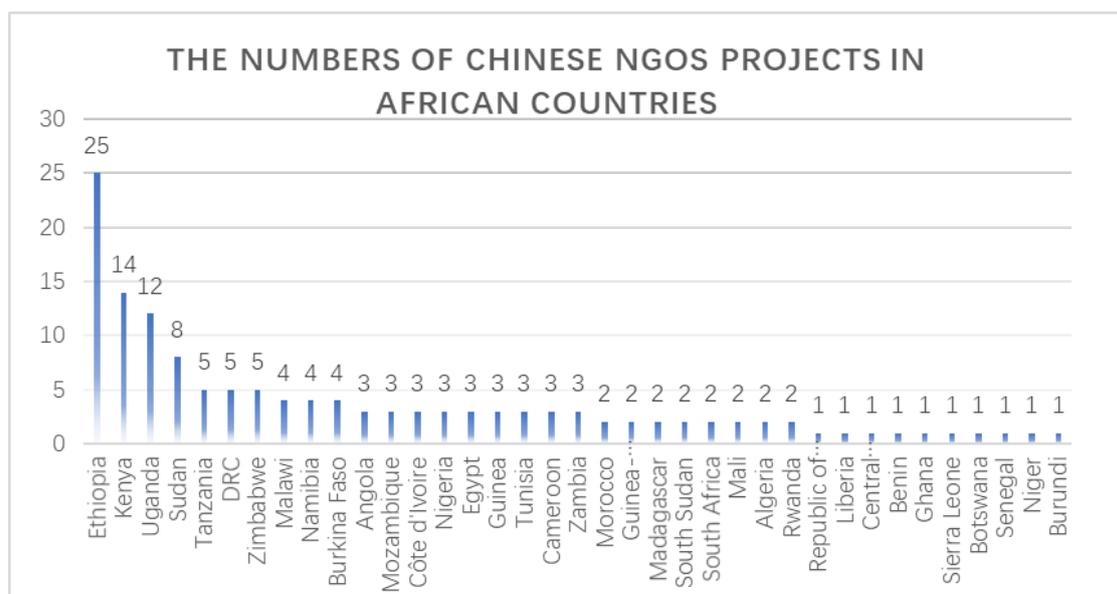


Figure 1: The Number of Chinese NGOs Projects in African Countries

By 2020, there were five major foundations in Africa China Foundation for Peace and Development (9 projects), China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation (16 projects), China Red Cross Foundation (10 projects), The Amity Foundation (5 projects), and ZTE Foundation (8 projects). Of these organizations, all but ZTE Foundation, were established from the top down. The global outbreak of Covid-19 in 2020 has pushed many bottom-up Chinese NGOs to provide medical assistance to African countries, such as Mammoth Foundation, Fosun Foundation, Zall Foundation, Tencent Foundation and Zhejiang Zhiai Foundation. Arguably, the outbreak has pushed forward the development of Chinese NGOs themselves and their role in Africa. The projects of Chinese NGOs in Africa are range from development assistance projects focusing on construction of welfare infrastructure, one-off aid supplies (including humanitarian and development aid), technical vocational training, and the provision of medical supplies and treatment services. The construction welfare nature infrastructure mainly establishes the school, the construction hospital, the construction cellar and so on. Many NGOs build schools in Africa, and one of the most influential is the “Into Africa Project HOPE” project.

“Into Africa Project HOPE” was organized by the World Eminent Chinese Business Association, the China Youth Development Foundation and the Tianjiu Happiness Holding Group, which was started in 2011. This project planned to fund 1,000 Hope Primary Schools in African countries (Kenya, Tanzania, Burundi and Rwanda all have schools that have been built). In addition to the project, there are examples such as the China Foundation for Peace and Development Provided funds of 500,000 USD for a school building in 2014-2016 in Sudan; ZJ Wonder Foundation provided funds of 400,000 USD for IBBA school for girls And the ZTE Foundation mentioned earlier to help establish the China-Egypt Friendship School in the Edja Wreda region of Ethiopia. China’s NGOs focus heavily on providing basic health facilities to African countries. A typical project is the CFPA’s international development program in Africa – the China-Sudan Abu Ushar Friendship Hospital, which was inaugurated in July 2011, and which focuses on maternal and infant health (Hsu et al., 2016). “The hospital covers an area of 2,000 square meters and is a comprehensive hospital mainly for maternal and child health care, taking into account the departments of medicine, surgery, pediatrics, dentistry, ophthalmology, otolaryngology, and equipped with such departments as cesarean section room, delivery room, outpatient operating room, X-ray radiology room, B ultrasound room, laboratory, anesthesia room, blood bank, etc.”(Lo et al., 2019). According to statistics, from the completion of the hospital to the end of 2014, a total of 206,000 people visited the hospital, an average of 51,500 visits per year (Lo et al., 2019), greatly alleviate the plight of the lack of local medical infrastructure. This program was funded by the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) and amounted to US 160 million. At a time of drought in Ethiopia in 2017, CFPA, together with Xuzhou Heavy Industries Group, set up the Blue Dream fund, of which 750,000 yuan was dedicated to building small water conservancy facilities to collect rainwater in arid areas of Ethiopia in Africa. A total of 41 water cellars were built to provide safe drinking water for more than 4,000 people. Most of the overseas charity work of Chinese foundations is of the one-time relief donation (Deng, 2019; Hasmath & Hsu, 2021; Hsu et al., 2016). In terms of projects made by Chinese NGOs, they tend to have one-time direct material assistance projects in Africa. In the area of humanitarian assistance, the China Amity Foundation, for example, launched a “Running Water” relief project in 2017 to provide drinking water, water purification supplies and sanitation kits to people in two drought-stricken regions of Ethiopia, Harshin and Keberibeyah in Fafan, Somalia. In the area of development assistance, there are projects such as

“Free Lunch” and “Panda Pack” in many countries in Africa, which have become Chinese NGOs’ brand development project in Africa. In Africa, two NGOs are implementing the Free Lunch project. One was launched by Deng Fei, a philanthropist, the China Red Cross Foundation and the China Social Welfare Foundation, and the other by the China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation under the name of “Smiling Children”. Although the two organizations differ in their implementation patterns and geographical areas of activity, there is not much difference in content. Both organizations are borrowing from the country’s “free lunch” program model. The “Free Lunch” program, launched in 2017 in Africa by Deng Fei, the China Red Cross Foundation, and the China Foundation for Social Welfare, is run by the Chinese volunteer group Dream Building Service Association (DBSA), which extends from Kenya to Uganda, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Ethiopia. The Smiling Children project, launched by the CFPA, was officially launched in Ethiopia and Sudan in 2015. This activity is mainly carried out in cooperation with local NGOs. The “Panda Pack” project is also a domestic brand education poverty alleviation project. The CFPA has extended the program to Africa. The project, which was first launched domestically in 2009, was developed into an international project in 2019. Because of the excellent feedback it received, and now has “Panda Pack” project in Africa, including Ethiopia, Sudan, Uganda, Zimbabwe, and Namibia. The “Panda Pack” is made up of 105 pieces in five categories: school bags, basic stationery, art supplies, educational toys and daily necessities to meet the educational needs of African children. In addition, in 2018, the China Foundation for Peace and Development, CNNIE and Beijing Hanneng Photovoltaic Co., Ltd. jointly launched the donation of mobile energy equipment “Han Umbrella” to African countries to solve the problem of basic lighting and power shortage of African people. Tanzania is the first stop of the project. Vocational education and technical training are also important aspects of China’s NGOs. In 2017- 2019, the China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation and the China Regional Overseas Group launched the Women’s Economic Empowerment Project, the Women’s Handicraft Skills Training Project, which invests about RMB 700,000 to train 100 women in the Tigri and Amhara regions in traditional handicrafts livelihood skills, such as straw baskets, stone carvings, clay sculptures, textiles, jewelry making, etc. The project also organized trade fairs through the Ethiopian Women’s Business Network to help women sell handicrafts, increase incomes and ensure the sustainable development of the project. Also in 2018, the China Women’s Development Foundation launched the Central African Women’s

Development Fund, which will work with the Tunisian Women's Federation to provide embroidery training to help Tunisian women improve their skills. China's NGOs have always attached great importance to medical aid and treatment in Africa, but their ability to deal with emergent public health events is still weak. In the wake of the Ebola outbreak in 2014, the participation of international NGOs played an important role in the fight against Ebola. But China had only one NGO, CFPA, which launched a massive fundraising drive to help affected areas in West Africa. While in 2020, the emergence of a very large number of Chinese NGOs in the fight against the Covid-19 becomes a new phenomenon in medical aid to Africa. Africa's free clinic project, in the name of "Bright Africa", has become a brand of Chinese NGO's for helping Africa. The China Council of Lions Clubs, as well as the Chinese People's Association for Friendship With Foreign Countries and CNNIE mentioned earlier, are all involved in "Bright Africa" project. In November 2010, the China Association for the Promotion of International Exchange, in conjunction with the China Association for the Promotion of Democracy, the National Technical Guidance Group for Prevention of Blindness, the Beijing Tongren Hospital and the Anhui Foreign Economic Relations Construction Corporation, jointly organized more than 20 experienced Chinese ophthalmic specialists and nursing staff to provide free medical assistance for patients with eye diseases in Zimbabwe, Malawi and Mozambique in southern Africa. In March 2011, The China Council of Lions Clubs of China organized four medical teams to go to East Africa, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania to perform cataract surgery. Four medical teams completed 417 operations within a week. Additionally, in 2018 China Friendship Foundation for Peace and Development donated a set of gamma knife equipment to the Lalla Salma Foundation, which is created in 2005 by the Princess of the Kingdom of Morocco, Lala Salma, who is working to address the treatment and rehabilitation of cancer patients in Morocco, especially children. In 2020, China had at least 12 NGOs involved in medical aid to Africa, eight of which were for the first time. One of them is the Mammoth Foundation. The Mammoth Foundation, taking advantage of the expertise of its founder BGI, has demonstrated remarkable efficiency in fighting the COVID-19 epidemic by donating test kits to Angola, Benin, Uganda, South Africa, Ethiopia, Tunisia and other African countries through the Chinese ambassador there. The Red Cross Foundation of China has established the International Humanitarian Aid Fund for Combating Epidemics to provide humanitarian assistance to countries and regions with severe COVID-19 pandemic, mainly including

supporting the Red Cross Society of China in purchasing medical and protective materials urgently needed by recipient countries and dispatching international aid medical teams to provide logistical support. The Red Cross Foundation of China has provided medical assistance to African countries such as Ethiopia, Uganda, Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Zimbabwe and Malawi.

6. FRONTIER CHINESE NGO: CHINA FOUNDATION FOR POVERTY ALLEVIATION

China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation (CFPA) is the most internationalized Chinese NGOs, with implementing numbers of development aid and humanitarian aid projects in Africa in last two decades. CFPA has gone through three stages, from “internationalization without leaving the country” to “internationalization by travel” to “Permanent internationalization”. These three stages are the mapping process of Chinese NGOs’ domestic experience being shared and implemented in Africa. At present, CFPA has learned from Western international NGOs and tried to work with the UN humanitarian agencies to implement humanitarian aid projects in Africa beyond the original domestic experience, which has greatly enhanced the humanitarian aid capacity and influence in the humanitarian aid field. CFPA was created, as its name implies, with the original goal of poverty alleviation in March 1989. In 1986, the Government set up a special department responsible for poverty alleviation and development. The CFPA was originally set up to mobilize resources other than the State's financial resources for poverty alleviation and development purposes. In the initial period of CFPA, there was a strong color of official organization. For example, the first honorary president of the CFPA was former Chinese President Li Xiannian, and the former Fujian Provincial Party Secretary Xiang Nan; the second honorary president was Rong Yiren, vice president of the State, and the president was Yang Rudai, vice president of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). Because it is international practice for overseas donations to be given to charities or foundations, the CFPA has emerged from the top down. The Foundation's start-up funding comes from the 100,000 yuan (Ibid.) allocated by the Ministry of Agriculture. At that time, the role of the CFPA was largely a useful complement to the role of government in anti-poverty action.

China's achievements in poverty alleviation are largely dependent on the important role of social organizations. Similarly, CFPA has accumulated rich experience in China's poverty alleviation activities. This has also been affirmed by some Western NGOs that have entered China. Paul wrote in his paper that the power of the achievements got by Chinese government to get most of the people out of poverty relative to China's peers (Paulmann, 2013). Therefore, Paul said frankly "when it began working in China, it was Mercy Corps" belief that it could learn from China in terms of poverty alleviation than it as a single agency could bring to China' (Hart, 2011).

6.1 Two transformations of CFPA

The CFPA has gone through two transformations. The first transformation is from "official" to "folk", canceling the original government administrative level and national business establishment, and implementing professional management in finance, human resources, project management and so on. The second transformation is from "domestic" to "international", from 2005 to 2005, to participate in international emergency relief officially registered as INGOs in Myanmar, and in Myanmar to establish the first overseas office. Ten years of development, so that the internationalization of CFPA increasingly mature. Although not many Chinese NGOs have achieved the same degree of internationalization as CFPA, the emergence and development of CFPA has encouraged other Chinese NGOs to a certain extent and is an important process in the history of Chinese NGOs internationalization.

6.2 From "Governmental" to "Non-Governmental"

It is clear that the CFPA has not only become a larger organization because of its close links with the government but has also gained high social credibility in mobilizing social resources and full trust from government departments (Tan, 2016). But the CFPA soon found that its close ties with the government also kept him hostage to various administrative procedures, resulting in inefficient activities, extensive management and difficulties in carrying out his work. The CFPA, which had relied on government funding, was unable to invest more in providing social welfare and solving social problems because the government's fiscal absorptive capacity has been declining year after year's reform and opening up (Deng, 2004). The CFPA faces a shortage of funding and a lack of a stable source. Inside the CFPA, management system reform has been put

on the agenda. The external environment was also very important. In 1993, the Chinese government began to carry out institutional reforms to transform government functions by delegating power to lower levels and separating government functions from enterprise management, thus giving room for the development of social organizations that link the government and the market. At the same time, it also carried out social reforms to define the model of “small government and big society”, thus creating a more relaxed external environment for social organizations (Deng, 2004), which partly promoted the institutional reform of the CFPA. On September 9, 1996, the CFPA convened its 3rd Board of Governors meeting, at which it proposed to write a formal report to the competent authorities to abolish the staffing of national administrative undertakings of foundations, change it to the staffing of non-governmental organizations, establish a new personnel management system, implement the recruitment system and the competitive employment system, and cancel the administrative level. This request was successfully approved and finally CFPA became independent from the Chinese administrative system in 2000. Since then, CFPA has independent rights on personnel and finances. The transformation also ushered in a rich experience in enterprise management, with Kun Baifeng Group Chairman He Daofeng who volunteers as CFPA secretary-general. His implications for the CFPA are significant and far-reaching. CFPA carried out the reform of the project management mechanism under the leadership of this new leader. He not only introduced the brand project development strategy, from “generic-poverty alleviation” to the establishment of specific poverty alleviation forms such as “education poverty alleviation”, “health poverty alleviation”, “industrial poverty alleviation and rural infrastructure poverty alleviation”, “disaster alleviation and poverty alleviation”, etc., but also microfinance projects, 120 action projects for the safety of mothers and infants, the new Great Wall project for self-improvement by extremely poor college students and emergency rescue projects, etc. It is interesting to dig for the strategy of “disaster alleviation and poverty alleviation” more detailed here as it reflects the close relationship between disaster relief and poverty relief in the context of China that we have covered many times in the previous chapters. CFPA concludes in its annual report in 2019 that:

“Natural disasters hit China frequently and have become one of the major causes of poverty. China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation embarked on the path of humanitarian aid in 2003 with the aim to mitigate the sorrow and anxiety of people in disaster-stricken areas and respond to disasters more timely and accurately”. Whether from the ancient traditional

society to the modern society, in the context, disaster and poverty are inseparable and interrelated. The deep-rooted viewpoints of “disaster will lead to poverty” and “disaster will return to poverty” are inherited by China’s development culture. Therefore, there is no clear “boundary” between the humanitarian aid caused by the disaster and the development aid carried out for poverty alleviation and poverty alleviation in China. In China, disaster relief and poverty relief are interrelated. Therefore, the CFPA began to expand the domestic disaster relief projects in 2003 within its own scope of responsibility. CFPA’s main work in the field of domestic disaster relief is to promote cooperation between the government and NGOs, and between NGOs in the field of disaster relief, build a humanitarian relief network, and carry out disaster preparedness, mitigation, relief and post-disaster reconstruction.

6.3 From “Domestic” to “International”

After the first transformation of CFPA, another event occurred that was of great importance to the development of CFPA. It was in 2001 that the CFPA and Mercy Corps formed a strategic partnership and began working together on projects, including microfinance. According to the interview with Paul, the CFPA and Mercy Corps were able to enter into a partnership mainly because of two points: personal human and strategic (Paul, interviewed in Kitgum Uganda on October 17, 2018). Paul pointed out that Daofeng is an important role for their partnership as he realized that it is important to have connections with the Western agencies and “the program methodology, the philosophy of international NGOs, the business methods of international NGOs and the governance methods, which are all interested by him”. The strategy Paul mentioned was pointing to Mercy Corps. A professional background of He Daofeng has reconnection with China and the humanitarian world, which will help Mercy Corps working in China (Paulmann, 2013).

He Daofeng’s friendship with Paul has been established ever since, and it is one of the reasons why the Brighter Future project, which will focus on later, has been launched. In addition to the microcredit program, these two organizations responded to the 2005 tsunami in Indonesia and the 2008 earthquake in Wenchuan together. It’s not just that, Mercy Corps provided an opportunity for delegations of senior leaders from CFPA to Portland, Oregon headquarters in 2004 and 2010 with in-depth training on INGO practices and standards. Paul said in the interview, “the in-depth training went through everything, fund-raising, quality control, measurement and evaluation, finance, and everything. And within the five

years, I think they were raising more private money than us. They learned from us and then actually improved it. They made it better and they made it relevant and we were applying Mercy Corps for web-fundraising. They understood that and developed it and were very successful.” (Paul, interviewed in Kitgum Uganda on October 17, 2018). Through this in-depth training, CFPA not only learns from the strengths of international non-governmental organizations but also gradually finds its own value and clearer direction. This is one of the important reasons why CFPA began its second transformation. Internationalization is an important strategy and goal of the second transformation of China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation, of which Africa is an important region for CFPA internationalization. The internationalization of CFPA is phased, the first phase is “internationalization without leaving the country” in 2005. At the stage of “internationalization without leaving the country”, CFPA simply donated funds to foreign NGOs, leaving to them the primary decisions on how to use and allocate the donations, and did not directly participate in the implementation of any aid projects or send staff to stations in the recipient countries. In 2007, for example, the CFPA donated \$4 million worth of aid to the African country of Guinea-Bissau through the branded project “120 action projects for the safety of mothers and infants”. In 2008, the CFPA conducted a feasibility study of aid to Sudan, but it was not until October 2009, when the field trip to Sudan was completed, that He Daofeng concluded that the agency’s internationalization strategy had really begun. In an interview with the China Development Brief (CDB), he said, “The Foundation for Poverty Alleviation has been trying for five or six years. Now it is a real stage to set up an organization and staff.” This is the second phase of CFPA – “internationalization by travel”. After setting up the International Development Department in 2010. In this stage, CFPA started to send staff to the recipient countries for the direct implementation of charitable projects. In March 2010, CFPA medical equipment assistance to 12 hospitals in Sudan and solar flashlight to refugee camps in Darfur, have been shipped to Sudan and put into use. In April of the same year, more than 20 managers from nine Sudanese charities were invited to Beijing to attend the Sudanese NGO Capacity Building Course. The third stage of CFPA internationalization of “with country office” in 2012, CFPA began to establish project offices in recipient countries and recruit professional staff locally. On July 27, 2015, CFPA established its first overseas office in Myanmar. On September 19, 2019, the opening ceremony of the Ethiopia Office of the China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation was held, becoming the third overseas

office and the first African office officially registered overseas by the China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation after Myanmar and Nepal. From the internationalization process of CFPA, we can see that humanitarian assistance is one of the methods to reduce the poverty and also one of the entry points for CFPA to carry out international projects. The CFPA has gone from an organization that does only domestic poverty alleviation and development assistance to a disaster relief program at home to an international NGO in Africa that carries out both humanitarian emergency assistance and development assistance programs. In the process, I've found that the success of CFPA internationalization depends on three factors: leadership, learning, and strategic partnership with Mercy Corps. Smillie and Hailey (Smillie et al., 2001) highlighted in their article that the crucial role of individual leaders in the development and growth of organizations. The leadership is central to organisations have learning (Hailey & James, 2002) "Learning and knowledge management are crucial capacities for any NGO expecting to survive and thrive in the uncertain global development environment of the new millennium" (Hailey & James, 2002). He Daofeng, a key figure in the internationalization of CFPA, led the entire organization to learn from Mercy Corps about their fund-raising, quality control, measurement and evaluation, financial systems, which helps to build capacity of the CFPA. Also, because of Mercy Corps helps people in the world's toughest places turn the crises of natural disaster, poverty and conflict into opportunities for progress, particularly in Africa. The strategic partnership with Mercy Corps, which provides a good opportunity of CFPA to jointly address the most urgent humanitarian challenges around the world. The Brighter Future project is a very good example of this.

7. REFUGEE ASSISTANCE: BEYOND THE TRADITIONAL CHINESE NGOS' AID PROJECTS

The "Brighter Future" Program is a short-term refugee assistance project in northern Uganda. In April 2018, the Chinese NGO CFPA and Mercy Corps (MC), an international NGO, launched a 15-month (2018.03.01-2019.05.31) assistance project for South Sudanese refugees and local community farmers settled in the Palabek Refugee Settlement, 60 kilometers from Kitgum, Lamwo District. The "Brighter Future" Program is divided into three projects, providing Cash transfer to beneficiaries (including host communities and South Sudanese refugees), Agriculture Facilitation, and Income Generating Activities (IGA). The goal of these

projects is to meet basic needs and improve food security and livelihood opportunities for refugees and Ugandans in Lamwo District thereby advancing refugee self-reliance and the host community's economic resilience (From proposal for Brighter Futures Program). The program was initiated to provide humanitarian aid to refugees from South Sudan and while also continue to improve the Chinese NGO capabilities through this international refugee response. The implementation of the “Brighter Future” project in Uganda is certainly related to the environment and policies of Uganda. As noted earlier in Hsu, Hildebrandt and Hasmath, whether NGOs in China can carry out aid projects in Africa is not merely about their intentions of capacity, but also “domestic politics and frameworks in host nations still matter a great deal”(Hsu et al., 2016). Therefore, the political environment and refugee policy in Uganda inevitably affects the implementation of this project, especially in the Lamwo site in northern Uganda. Uganda’s laws make it impossible for Chinese NGOs to do the ground projects in Uganda on their own, so Brighter Future must be registered in the name of Mercy Corps. But the project was funded by He Daofeng in the hope of involving the CFPA in the refugee program. This was fully confirmed during his visit to Uganda, where he made it very clear at the meeting that the CFPA should learn how the MC does refugee projects, because one day the CFPA will be able to do refugee projects on its own. So such a system makes the “Brighter Future” program difficult in terms of organizational management structure. Finally, the CFPA proposed a special organizational structure, the “Brighter Future” project’s team recruited by the MC, but the CFPA will have two employees to participate in the entire project, one of which must be a project officer, and the other is the project manager assistant. This satisfies the CFPA to participate in the entire project process, not only the management, but also the executive and management. Palabek Refugee Settlement, the newest of Uganda’s refugee settlements, was opened on 12 April 2017 following an unexpected influx of South Sudanese refugees east of the Nile from late 2016 (UNHCR 2017:1). As Palabek Refugee Settlement changed to open almost immediately after a Sudan People’s Liberation Army/In Government (SPLA/IG) attack on the Acholi-speaking community of Pajok in Magwi County on 3 April 2017, Pajok’s refugees became Palabek Refugee Settlement’s first residents, with over 5,000 settlings in Palabek Refugee Settlement by 15 April (OPM and UNHCR 2017:1). It was approximately 34,000 refugees when I was in my fieldwork. But according to one member of the “Brighter Future” program team, “the number hasn’t changed for at least a year. The UNHCR has

been outlining the refugee settlement as 34,000 people. But when you were in the settlement, you often could see there are many buses carrying refugees from the border, so the actual number of refugees must be much more than that". All residents of Palabek Refugee Settlement are South Sudanese, primarily from the Acholi – and Lotuko – speaking communities of Pajok. The settlement is arranged in zones, which are further divided into blocks. From the information getting in fieldwork, there are eight Zones. Lutheran World Federation (LWF) manages Zone 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, and 8, while CESVI manages Zone 5A, 5B, and 6. In Uganda, the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) of Uganda manages the overall refugee response with UNHCR as a key partner. These two bodies manage the coordination of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) providing assistance based on organizational key competencies (From Proposal for "Brighter Futures" Program). After discussions with UNHCR, the OPM and LWF and CESVI, the "Brighter Future" program was assigned to Zone 4, 5A and 5B with a total population of more than 13,670 people. The reason is that OPM and UNHCR require all NGOs to be located in as different areas as possible and to avoid activities in areas where they have similar projects and to meet the different needs of all refugee groups as far as possible. For example, the main activity area of LWF is Zone 1 and Zone 2, delivering training on nutrition and agronomic practices, providing Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs), linking refugees to vocational education and providing conditional and unconditional cash-based interventions. The "Brighter Future" Program formed 40 farmer groups of 25 members in each with a 70:30 composition ratio of refugee and host community members. This was to enforce social cohesion between the hosts and refugees. The groups were formed by choosing interested participants that were approved by community block leaders and by Mercy Corps. To join a group it was required that the host community member would provide land at no cost to the farmer. In return, the host members are eligible to receive training opportunities and agriculture inputs, seeds, and tillage services that were provided by Mercy Corps. The landowners' family members can join the group as host community members. The host community provided land to the group. Each group acquired on average about 5 acres of land for cultivation in the 2nd season. The modality and incentive for allowing refugees to access land were that for every 5 acres of land one person gives, he/she receives inputs, tillage services, and PHH equipment for one acre that belongs entirely to the landowner. The 40 groups in total accessed 266 acres of land. The host community members still own the land, but under this agreement that was

for the entire second cropping season of 2018 (June 2018 – March 2019) until all the crops have been harvested by the farmer groups. (CFPA - Brighter Future Program Final Narrative Report 2019). The significance of this project lies in three main areas: the beneficiary, the CFPA and the MC. For the beneficiaries, the program did improve the lives of some refugees and local communities, with more than two-thirds of the refugees interviewed saying that the cash transfer program was important to them. After receiving the cash, they buy clothes, food, non-food items and make small businesses for their children and themselves (Summarized from the interview with refugees). The project has also created short-term jobs for local refugees. The project recruited 20 refugees under a six-month contract as community mobilizers to support cash disbursements, and 20 experienced refugees as agricultural technology trainers to support the capacity-building efforts of the agricultural team (CFPA - Brighter Future Program Final Narrative Report 2019). In addition, Chinese NGOs, as a new humanitarian aid provider to Africa, do bring them some different development experiences from the West. From the answers from some refugees and the leader of the refugee welfare council, CFPA has brought some useful ideas about China's development experience, including how to effectively use small plots of land to grow crops, how to start a business, introduce microfinance and solar ovens to them. The Brighter Future Program is a pilot project of cooperation between CFPA and MC in Africa, which is of great significance to both CFPA and MC organizations. For the CFPA, first, Chinese NGOs have made a breakthrough from the role of a recipient to the role of a donor. The CFPA and Mercy Corps have been working together for more than a decade, and the main projects of the past have been in China. Take their past biggest joint project, the Ya'an Disaster Reconstruction Project in Sichuan Province, China, for example, the aid was provided to the CFPA by Mercy Corps after it received funding from the Ford Foundation to carry out the ground project as a local partner. But this time, the CFPA used the money donated by He Daofeng on the "Brighter Future" Program, with Mercy Corps as the main project executive. Secondly, from the perspective of the overseas project assistance model of Chinese NGOs, Chinese NGOs have changed from direct material humanitarian assistance to exploring long-term development humanitarian assistance. Korten's (Korten, 1990) categorisation of NGO development, most Chinese NGOs are considered to be in the first (relief and welfare) and second (community development) generations of development, with a few operating in the more "developed" third generation (sustainable systems development). Take two others

international CFPA projects in Africa for example, the Smiling Children free lunch project in Sudan and the International Parcel of Love project in several African countries, both these projects are based on a model with direct distribution of goods (food and education) assistance to beneficiaries. However, the Brighter Future project includes cash transfer with Agricultural Facilitation and IGA, which is a project combining direct aid and long-term development (Interview with Peng Bin, Kitgum, October 2018). Last but not the least, from the perspective of the influence of Chinese NOOs, this is the first time that Chinese NGOs have expanded the field of assistance from a response to natural disasters to a response to refugees in Africa. In the context of the “Brighter Future” program, along with CFPA’s strategic partnership with Mercy Corps. The CFPA logo appears on all program staff uniforms, official documents, program vehicles, and public events, including the World Refugee Day. Raising the visibility of CFPA in Palabek refugee settlement will increase awareness of the Chinese NGOs participating in international refugee response and prepare for relevant future fundraising opportunities (CFPA - Brighter Future Program Final Narrative Report 2019). For MC, as Paul said in the interview, “The Brighter Future is a very important program for us.” This project is of great importance to the MC in two ways. On the one hand, the MC hopes to complement the Chinese NGOs. The second aspect is that MC is trying to find aid funds from China, especially in the fierce competition with NGOs in China, it is very important for MC to find aid funds from China. As mentioned earlier, MC Access to China is keen to collaborate with China NGOs on projects in other countries to complement each other's strengths. MC focused on human capacity and getting people back to livelihood, helping them find ways to support themselves, using market forces. CFPA responsible for emergencies focuses, much more on shelter, on providing material (Paul, interviewed on October 17, 2018). “Brighter Future” Program is a platform for both CFPA and MC to enhance understanding, promote exchanges, strengthening relations and explore better modes of cooperation. Paul mentioned in the interview, “so the ‘Brighter Future’ is a very important program for us. Specifically for MC, which has always been very committed to finding the right balance and relationship. We hope to if it is successful in trying to find other Chinese NGOs, even few of them. It’s project’s hope. There are a few numbers of Chinese organizations are very good at post-disaster, but in infrastructure, rescue, but not the development aspect, and humanitarian aid aspect”. In addition, MC hopes to cooperate with China NGOs, one of the purposes is to seek “aid funds”. Paul said,

“China’s economy is growing, and the numbers of Chinese NGOs are growing, and the amount of domestic public fundraising has grown in recent years.” (Paul, interviewed in Kitgum on October 17, 2018) China’s economic growth has brought potential aid, especially in the current context of the rise of the NGOs in China has created competition with the MC for aid funds. Paul told me that, “We started competing on fundraising. Because we were funded by foreign corporations, foreign donor agencies and government donor agencies to do work in China. As CFPA became more sophisticated, they were looking at the same donors who support us..... And the donors for not putting pressure on NGOs nationally and internationally to be more collaborative, so many collaborations in Africa”. The “Brighter Future” Program further establishes CFPA’s leading position in Chinese NGOs. The project has become one of the top ten demonstration cases for Chinese NGOs to go global in 2018, and has been included in the “China-Africa Non-governmental Friendship Partnership Program” (2018-2020). For other Chinese NGOs, this project has encouraging, guiding and reference significance. For example, the Amity Foundation in 2019 made a partnership with the UNHCR, “Lighting the Schoolgirl Dream of War”, which provides basic school uniforms and hygiene kits for conflict-affected girls in four African countries (Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Cameroon).

8. RETHINKING SINO-AFRICAN RELATIONS AND HUMANITARIANISM

Our previous analysis of the increased activities and growing influence of Chinese NGOs in Africa and in the field of humanitarian aid must have important implications for current China-Africa relations and the current international humanitarian system. Through the case of CFPA, we can see that the internationalization of Chinese non-governmental organizations is becoming more and more mature, the degree of internationalization is deepening, and the methods and content of assistance are more diversified, which are closely related to the support of the Chinese government and the promotion of Western non-governmental organizations. This section rethinks the impact of the rise of Chinese NGOs in the context of Sino-Africa relations and the current international humanitarian system.

8.1 Rethinking Sino-Africa Relations

According to Abegunrin and Manyeruke, “Sino–Africa relations refer to

the historical, political, economic, military, social, and cultural connections between China and the African continent (Abegunrin et al., 2020).” The South–South cooperation is seen by China as a key element in its effort to build the relationship with Africa. The Forum on China–Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), established in 2000, elevated the China–Africa relationship from “strategic partnership” to “comprehensive strategic and cooperative partnership”. FOCAC continues to be a key institutional mechanism and political foundation of China–Africa relations and a step forward in strengthening South–South cooperation (Asante, 2018). The development process of China–Africa relations is not the focus of this article. Next, we need to analyse two phenomena in the development of China–Africa relations.

8.2 Hard Power and Soft Power are not Developing in Tandem

He and Yuan (He, 2009; Yuan, 2013) have argued that current Sino–Africa relations are focused mainly on two aspects: hard power, the economic and trade relations between China and Africa; and soft power, or the attraction, influence and identity of culture and values. He Wenping notes that in recent years, hard and soft power in Sino–Africa relations have not developed at the same pace. China’s soft power in Africa is “far behind” other European and American countries. Joseph Nye, the father of soft power theory, agrees: when comparing the soft power of the United States and China, “China’s soft power building still has a long way to go”. To some extent, due to the rapid development of hard power and its triggering of a series of concerns both on the continent and beyond, the construction of soft power in Africa has faced certain constraints. Again, Li (Li W, 2013) argues that the development trajectory of Sino–Africa relations in the economic and trade fields has created the impression that China is mainly interested in acquiring African oil, gas and mineral resources to support its rapid domestic development. At the same time, Sino–Africa economic and trade cooperation has exposed such problems as fake and shoddy products, disrespect for local culture and customs, environmental destruction, excessive pursuit of economic interests, and robbing local people of their jobs. To some extent, these problems undermine China’s efforts to construct soft power in Africa. In an interview with *Africa Quarterly*, Dr Ali Mazrui, a renowned Kenyan scholar noted that: “India’s influence in Africa’s soft power is clear compared to China’s emphasis on economic ties and a degree of military cooperation in Africa”. One can build a great military capacity or economy, but other nations may not accept or be attracted to the nation’s ideology. It takes a

long time to achieve soft power and it depends on reputation and a certain context of trust to be recognised as a soft power nation. Soft power is an attractive power; nations attract other nations or organisations with their resources (Woods, 2008). Through culture, ideology and institutions by creating attractive ideas and convincingly presenting them, nations gain intangible power, which is just as important as hard power. Nye claims that three key kinds of resources dominate a nation's construction of soft power: its culture – “in places where it is attractive to others”; its political values – “when it lives up to them at home and abroad”; and its foreign policies – “when they are seen as legitimate and having moral authority” (Nye Jr, 2008). Enhancing soft power has become one of the Chinese government's main foreign policy priorities across the globe. Lu Yiyin, a researcher at the Institute of China Policy Studies at the University of Nottingham in the United Kingdom, observes that an obvious shortcoming of China's soft power is the paucity of China-based international NGOs, and that increased engagements by such organisations might help to mitigate the negative impact of China's surging economic and trade activities in Africa (Lu, 2011). He Wenping extends the analysis: “In fact, not only Chinese NGOs, but also Chinese academics, are far from being seen enough on the international stage”(He, 2009).

8.3 Growing Doubts about Sino–Africa Relations

In the new era, there are more and more questions about Sino–Africa relations. Foreign observers are divided over how to interpret China's role in Africa (Wang & Wei, 2017). Wang and Wei find that “In recent years, a growing number of Western observers have begun to blame China's Africa policy for worsening governance in Africa and hindering democratization in many countries”(Joseph, 2008; Taylor, 2006; Wang & Wei, 2017). Similarly, Zhang tries to construct a “Contribution Theory of Sino–Africa relations” in order to explain how China might cope with the deteriorating international public opinion environment of Sino–Africa relations and meet the development needs of both the country and the continent (Zhang, 2012). She argues that “Western criticism of China–Africa relations is becoming systematic, theoretical, and official.” Systematisation, theorisation and unified logic, together with self-evident political motivation, combine to focus Western criticism. According to this narrative, China pays no attention to Africa's security and stability, but only to its own economic interests, whereas the premise of Western donors' attention to Africa's security is the promotion of democracy on the continent. What this has begun to translate into is that criticism of China–

Africa relations is no longer just coming from the media, academics and the general public, but also from senior American and European government officials. US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, for example, alluded twice in 2011 to China's "neo-colonialism" in Africa (Ibid.). Moreover, "Africa's traditional understanding of friendly Sino-Africa relations is being undermined" (Zhang, 2012). For example, discussions in Africa about the quality of Chinese goods, the integration of Chinese migrants into local society, questions of corporate social responsibility among Chinese firms, and concern over support for "authoritarian regimes" are all increasing. Trade unions and other non-governmental organisations in some African countries have also expressed opinions about China's employment conditions for local workers, concerns over poor environmental protection, and other issues. As an example, in Zambia, "anti-China sentiment" is becoming a dominant social sentiment (Negi, 2008; Zhang, 2012). These observations further confirm the imbalance between hard power and soft power in China-Africa relations.

8.4 Rethinking "Global" Humanitarianism

"Global" humanitarianism is a misnomer. Around the world, remarkably similar, but not identical, conceptualisations of 'humanitarianism' evolved independently of one another, yet many in the West consider their definitions and forms of humanitarianism to be "global". Why? DeChaine (DeChaine, 2005) argues that "globalization and its inherent modes of interconnection clearly have effects, though uneven, on 'the Rest' as well as the West, its spread has largely involved a spread of Western ideals, including economic structures, political systems, and legal and ethical frameworks." He confirms that "globalization is tantamount to economic, legal, cultural, and symbolic forms of Western imperialism." Global humanitarianism has been manufactured by key western actors who dominate the humanitarian arenas and discourses around key phenomena of humanitarianism (He, 2009). For example, DeChaine (DeChaine, 2005) identifies Médecins Sans Frontières and the International Campaign to Ban Landmines as two exemplars of global humanitarianism actors. According to Hirono and Hagan, "Humanitarianism is not static, nor monolithic (Hirono & O'Hagan, 2014). It *has* evolved and it *is* influenced by a variety of historical and political factors." In recent decades, there has been an explosion of academic interest in humanitarianism (Barnett & Weiss, 2011; Branch, 2014; Halttunen, 1995; Hilton et al., 2018; O'Sullivan, 2016; Pavlakis, 2016; Salvatici, 2020b; Skinner & Lester, 2012); Moyd 2016; Mangala 2010;(Everill, 2020; Richey et al., 2021). Nonetheless,

humanitarianism has no precise or singular definition, even within the West (Hilton et al., 2018; Paulmann, 2013). Nowadays the term frequently is used evocatively but ambiguously by scholars as they refer to very different situations and phenomena (Salvatici, 2020a). I will now demonstrate that “global” humanitarianism is rooted in Western intellectual history, glosses over multiple logics, and takes a variety of forms. These are essential elements of a framework that enables us to rethink contemporary humanitarianism.

8.5 Rooted in Western History

The term humanitarianism is considered to be culturally specific, owing to its reliance on major political theories and philosophical debates developed in Western countries (Nishikawa 2005). It is rooted in Western history and was globalised in ways that were largely responsive to interests and ideas emanating from the West (Barnett, 2018). Barnett notes that, according to historian R.S. Crane, the doctrine of humanitarianism and the notion of the ‘sympathetic man’ began to make inroads in Europe in the mid-eighteenth century. He argues that this development was ‘something new in the world – a doctrine, or rather a complex of doctrines, which a hundred years before 1650 would have been frowned upon, had it ever been presented to them, by representatives of every school of ethical thought’ (Ibid.:50). At that time, although most of these sympathetic acts and discussions concerned neighbours helping neighbours, at times they extended to foreigners (Barnett, 2018). In the late eighteenth century, in revolutionary France, a rights discourse led to the extension of citizenship to Europe’s ‘others’ – the Jews (Ibid.:51). At the same time, technological advances in communication and transportation caused individuals to become more aware of the suffering of others in distant lands, how they might have contributed to that suffering, and approaches to alleviating it. By the early nineteenth century, rapidly modernising Europe began to experience a ‘passion for compassion’ (Arendt, 1994), which led to a rapidly growing number of standing organisations, committees, and societies formed to alleviate human suffering, at first locally and then more remotely (Barnett, 2018). Humanitarianism, then, relied on the ability to recognise both moral responsibilities for and causal connections with distant strangers (Skinner & Lester, 2012). The origins of modern (Western) humanitarianism have been variously traced to the Reformation, the Treaty of Westphalia, the Enlightenment, and the Establishment of the Red Cross, depending on the European or international focus of the humanitarian action (Everill, 2020). However, the development of modern

humanitarianism faced some new changes in the late 1980s, ‘when humanitarianism began to take shape as a particular moral and political project through the formation of transnational nongovernmental organizations’ (Ticktin 2014:274). Barnett notes that, since then, the scale, scope and significance of humanitarian action have expanded considerably (Barnett, 2005). In the process, two features of humanitarianism also transformed: the purpose of humanitarianism became more overtly politicised, and the organisation of humanitarianism become increasingly institutionalised. In light of these recent changes in humanitarianism, Mikael Barfod, a senior official at the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO), developed the term “new humanitarianism” (Fox, 2001). Old humanitarianism depicts itself as a relief-based “effort to bring a measure of humanity, always insufficient, into situations that should not exist” (Rieff, 2003). It is seen as an endless attempt to alleviate human suffering (Adami, 2019). This echoes Nishikawa, who argues that humanitarianism is a benevolent feeling or activity for “common humanity, or a philanthropic feeling towards humankind, which means helping and protecting victims irrespective of who and where they are or why they are in need” (Nishikawa, 2005). New humanitarianism, on the other hand, tries to address the root causes of underdevelopment and poverty, and therefore centres more on advocacy and development (Adami, 2019). Tanja Schümer (Schümer, 2008) argues that a British variant of new humanitarianism extends beyond the immediate mandate of traditional humanitarian emergency assistance, namely, to save lives. Instead, it is intended to address the root causes of conflict, prevent the negative side effects of aid, and support human rights. Bruce Gilley discusses Turkey’s humanitarian efforts, which combine assistance with political and economic goals, as an example of new humanitarianism (Gilley, 2015). Similar to the meaning of new humanitarianism, Barnett’s description of “alchemical humanitarianism”, which also seeks to remove the root causes of suffering, includes the suggestion that Humanitarianism – the desire to relieve the suffering of distant strangers – could be the poster child for evolutionary progress... Early expressions of these humanitarian sentiments include the campaign to abolish the slave trade, missionary work, and the creation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and international humanitarian law. During the course of the twentieth century, there has evolved a vast institutional machinery to provide all kinds of assistance to protect individuals from harm and to remove the root causes of suffering. He explains the evolution of (Western) humanitarianism as formal organisations that have emerged in a range of areas and are dedicated to

the idea of providing relief to those in immediate danger, reducing the suffering of the masses and eliminating the causes of harm.

8.6 Multiple Humanitarianism Logics

Clearly, contemporary humanitarianism's long history is rooted in Western culture. As such, it is necessary to discuss the logics of (Western) humanitarianism. Scholars have addressed the logics of humanitarianism from four divergent perspectives. The first focuses on moral logics. Fassin (Fassin, 2011) embeds humanitarianism within a broader moral canopy. Gomez, Newell and Vannini (Gomez et al., 2020) argue that compassion and empathy are central drivers of humanitarian action. Empathy is understood as "the ability 'imaginatively' to enter into and participate in the world of the cultural other cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally" (Calloway-Thomas, 2010). Donini (Donini, 2010) sees humanitarianism as "an ideology, a movement and a profession", all of which share a "broad commitment to alleviating the suffering and protecting the lives of civilians caught up in conflict or crisis.". The second, which focuses on the "victim" view, portrays recipients as passive objects who are dependent on the care and activities of aid agencies, rather than as agents capable of transforming their own moral landscape (Brewer et al., 2014). In Everill's (Everill, 2020) words, "the history of humanitarianism in Africa has been shaped largely by the history of unequal power relations ... as foreign powers and individuals became involved in identifying and aiding African 'victims', where both action and inaction were fraught with political consequences that required further intervention". The third is a religious point of view that considers humanitarian assistance as a way to unite people of the same faith and protect the entire religious community. Today, faith-based organisations (FBOs) constitute a prominent part of the humanitarian community (Ferris, 2011). Davey argues that "for some Islamic organizations, humanitarian action is an expression of solidarity with other Muslims and is part of a broader effort to defend the Islamic community (the *ummah*) from outside threats" (Davey, 2012). The fourth focuses on the logic of certain interests, including showing international responsibility and strengthening bilateral relations. Walzer (Walzer, 2011) mentions that "international humanitarianism seems more like a duty than a kindness, or maybe it is a combination: two in one, a gift that we have to give." As Fillemon Wise Immanuel suggests, "Western countries have set and marked donations of developmental and/or humanitarian aid as a conduit that strengthens their international relations with the African continent (Immanuel et al., 2011)."

8.7 Various Forms of Humanitarianism

From the analysis just presented, we learn that many scholars who look at the history, evolution and the logics of globalised (Western) humanitarianism typically trace the birth and origins of the moral ideals behind humanitarianism to the Enlightenment period in Europe, which motivated the later activities and goals of Northern religious groups in the early nineteenth century e.g., (Barnett, 2018; Barnett & Stein, 2012; Barnett & Weiss, 2011; Cottle & Nolan, 2007; Salvatici, 2020a; Skinner & Lester, 2012; Wilson & Brown, 2008). For example, Barnett's *Empire of Humanity* looks specifically at the emergence and evolution of humanitarianism as rooted in Western history and globalised in ways that were largely responsive to interests and ideas emanating from the West. Salvatici's monograph, a detailed thematic and case study analysis of individual organisations, aspects of the humanitarian endeavour amid humanitarian crises, fills in some gaps in our understanding of Western humanitarianism as a form of political engagement with the Global South (Salvatici, 2020a). The influence of Western humanitarianism dominates existing studies, and yet three other forms of humanitarianism are beginning to attract scholarly attention. The three other forms of humanitarianism are Africa-led humanitarianism, Muslim humanitarianism and South–South humanitarianism. Scholars writing on the first have focused on local humanitarian engagements directed by African religious and political actors (Burchardt, 2013; Everill, 2020). *Humanitarianism in Africa* by Bronwen Everill (Everill, 2020) notes that humanitarianism has been “bilateral, multilateral, and African-led”. He emphasises that “African-led interventions, including religiously oriented humanitarian efforts, have been used to direct or challenge the dominant narratives of the ‘white savior complex’”. Muslim humanitarianism encompasses traditional Islamic forms of charity that can be either voluntary (*Zakat*, *waqf* and *Sadaqah*) or obligatory (Abuarqub & Phillips, 2009). Abuarqub and Phillips argue that none of these forms of charities are common practices, but that Muslim faith-based development organisations (FBOs) are giving new impetus to them, especially *Zakat and waqf*, and particularly for Muslims who live in secular or predominantly Christian countries in the West (Abuarqub & Phillips, 2009). The contemporary appeal of Muslim humanitarianism broadens in both East and West Africa, partly because it draws on funding and support from the Middle East, rather than Western international NGOs (Becker-Cantarino, 2015; Kaag, 2016). A few studies have focused on South–South humanitarianism (e.g., (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2015; Pacitto & Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2013; Richey et al., 2021), but

humanitarian action not borne of the Northern-dominated and highly institutionalised international humanitarian regimes remains largely neglected in academia (Pacitto & Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2013). Recently, however, Southern-led development initiatives have begun to enjoy increasing attention (Woods, 2008), and most now recognise the existence of a multitude of humanitarianisms, including ‘humanitarianisms of Europe, of Africa, of the global, and the local’ (Kennedy, 2004). Pacitto and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh’s working paper looks at the engagements of Southern countries with humanitarian responses specifically related to forced displacement (Pacitto & Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2013). This paper fills some theoretical and conceptual gaps related to South–South humanitarianism as an “other” humanitarianism. Barnett also analyses “other” forms of humanitarianism, and offers a critique of the mechanisms through which the history of non-Northern, and indeed non-Christian, humanitarianism(s) has been “erased” from or “footnoted” in the hegemonic “archive of knowledge”(Barnett, 2018). In the world of humanitarianism, Korea, Turkey, Brazil, Cuba, Venezuela and several other Southern donor countries are receiving increased attention. “The emergence of new donors and actors in this regard creates opportunities for promoting different norms and practices, which will influence the direction of the evolving international humanitarian system”(Cook, 2021). China’s fast-growing role as an aid provider has placed it firmly in the spotlight of discussions of South–South humanitarianism. For example, Pacitto and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh(Pacitto & Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2013) note that China’s humanitarian assistance to Haiti when it was affected by the earthquake, and to Syrian refugees, increased the visibility of this “non-traditional”, post-colonial state actor in the humanitarian arena. From a more explicitly international relations perspective, Gong has recently pointed to the Chinese government’s humanitarian diplomacy in Southeast Asia as a useful instrument to build a benign international image during the COVID-19 pandemic (Gong, 2021a). Although studies are beginning to focus on China’s increasing participation and funding in the global humanitarian field and discuss the aims behind China’s increasing participation, most limit their focus to China’s current practices. Only a few scholars pay attention to the fact that Chinese humanitarian aid is deeply rooted in internal charitable cultural traditions, which were formed long before the entry of Christianity into the West. Caroline Reeves (Reeves, 2018), who is among the few exceptions, makes exactly this point: while there is a misconception that China only began participating in charitable activity after Christian missionaries brought them to the country, China has

long been noted for its charity ethos and its mutual-aid societies back before Christ. This behaviour thus pre-dates the word that is used to describe it: “charity”, which stems from the Latin *caritas*, is often believed to have originated in the Catholic tradition. Reeves’ study of Chinese humanitarianism from a historical viewpoint contributes significantly to the scholarly discourse on contemporary Chinese humanitarianism. She argues that lessons from the Chinese humanitarian story can improve the contemporary discourse on legitimate expressions of global humanitarianism. I stand on Dr Reeves’ shoulders. The main contribution of the present doctoral dissertation is its interpretation of the emergence and rapid increase of humanitarianism in and from China from a historical perspective and, through insights generated about this phenomenon, its analysis of the impact of the current, globalised humanitarianism.

9. THE ROLE OF RISING CHINESE NGOS IN RETHINKING SINO-AFRICA RELATIONS AND HUMANITARIANISM

China’s NGOs engaged in humanitarian aid in Africa are driven by the need to expand survival and build capacity, as an embodiment of organizational legitimacy. At the same time, they hope that their actions in Africa can enhance China’s NGOs presence and influence in Africa, promote understanding between China and Africa and enhance friendship between China and Africa. With this in mind, add linking to the introduction, the increasing and expanding humanitarian role of Chinese NGOs mainly changed the Sino-African Relations from three perspective: 1. Empowering NGOs in South-South Cooperation; 2. Enhancing the soft power of China; 3. “project an image of ‘responsible statehood’” and build “friendly relation” with African Countries. To sum up these three points, we can see that Chinese humanitarianism is not only a “helping” for the development of China-Africa relations, but also a tool/foreign policy to protect China’s political and economic interests in Africa by maintaining its image as a responsible power by uniting and maintaining friendship with Africa and legitimizing its behavior in Africa (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2015). According to Moilwa (Moilwa et al., 2015), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) from the BRICS countries are leading a huge range of South-South Development Cooperation (SSDC) initiatives and these initiatives are promoting social accountability, supporting post-disaster reconstruction and effectively sharing rural and urban development knowledge. The 2021 White Paper, differs from the two previous White Paper in 2011 and 2014,

reaffirms China's previous commitments to development cooperation partnership with NGOs. First, it is citing President Xi's statement at the Second Belt and Road Forum (2019) that China would support social organisation participation in public wellbeing projects along the BRI. Second, the paper announces a funding mechanism: China's US\$3bn South-South Cooperation Assistance Fund (SSCAF) will focus on micro and small projects across diverse sectors, as well as trade promotion and investment facilitation, in cooperation with Chinese social organisations (ibid.:19). Third, the paper proposes an institutional architecture: under "future prospects for international cooperation", China's inter-ministerial coordination mechanism for foreign aid becomes responsible for aligning the efforts of various government levels and social organisations, the better to enhance efficiency and cohesion (ibid.: 49) (Mulakala et al., 2021). In addition, from a political perspective, Africa is an important strategic backbone of China's diplomatic struggle and an indispensable contribution to China's overall diplomacy and peaceful development (Zhang, 2016). From an economic point of view, Africa is an important market for energy, resources, commodities and investment that China can rely on for its sustainable economic development. So whether from an economic or political point of view, Africa's importance to China and Africa's diplomatic situation in China's position is still quite important. Moreover, the fact that the hard power and the soft power of China-Africa relations have not developed synchronously has limited the development of China-Africa relations to some extent. Chinese NGOs, as "non-governmental organizations" in China, share, disseminate and practice China's experience in humanitarian assistance and relief in Africa, convey China's humanitarian philosophy, and help Africa achieve poverty reduction and development and the Millennium Development Goals. Chinese NGOs, which is a form of soft power, are bound to help boost China's soft power and push forward China-Africa relations. In Gong's research, image-building has been an important goal of China's foreign policy (Gong, 2021b). Shen (Shen, 2021) examines that China's "humanitarian diplomacy provides a useful instrument to build a benign international image, given the altruistic nature of humanitarian action." In the introduction chapter of this thesis, we have talked about there is growing doubts about Sino-Africa relations nowadays. The engagement in humanitarian assistance for China is one way to "project an image of 'responsible statehood'" (Binder & Meier, 2011) in return for increased political weight in multilateral organizations, and the perceived legitimacy of China's action. The language of "friendship" by China in humanitarian actions is also helping to build

“friendly relation” with African countries. Throughout this thesis, it has become clear how the Chinese NGOs emerging and expanding their humanitarian role in Africa and how it impacts the contemporary humanitarianism and Sino-Africa Relations be a part of the Chinese humanitarianism. On the one hand, it was shown that the increasing Chinese humanitarianism in Africa shows a genuine humanitarian desire of “humanity”, “compassion”, “moral obligation” and “helping” and a language of friendship, which are rooted in the Chinese culture tradition, express its concern solidarity with the people in need. On another hand, it was shown that the humanitarian practices by China have strong interest-based motives to be an influential global humanitarian player, the perceived legitimacy of their actions, project an image of “responsible statehood”, and protect China’s political and economic interests in Africa. And obviously, the discourses and practices of humanitarian aid by Chinese NGOs in Africa enriched the contemporary international humanitarian world. However, the increasing Chinese humanitarianism, but seemingly differs from the existing paradigm (Gong, 2021a), also challenged the dominance of the Western humanitarianism, which is rooted in Western history and globalized in ways that were largely responsive to interests and ideas emanating from the West. The humanitarian engagement by China has both “a genuine desire and strong interest-based motives” (Binder & Meier, 2011). In this section, we will analyze and summarize the previous sections as a whole, using two parts, discourses and practices, to discuss how the emerging Chinese humanitarianism enrich and challenge the contemporary globally humanitarianism?

Let’s start with how the emerging Chinese humanitarianism enrich the contemporary globally humanitarianism? In the discursive field, the first one we talk about the term of humanitarianism. From the analysis, we found when talking about humanitarianism, traditional and non-Western actors speak different languages. Traditional actors share a basic understanding of humanitarian action as activities “designed to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain and protect human dignity during and in the aftermath of emergencies”. By contrast, China, one of the non-Western donors, the term “humanitarianism” rooted in its historical charity culture, encompasses all forms of selfless help to people in need, including charities, development cooperation, and assistance in times of disaster (Binder & Meier, 2011). From the analysis, China emphasizes in its official white paper that “development is the total key to solving all problems. Peace through development. The root causes of war, conflict and unrest,

such as poverty and weak governance, can be fundamentally addressed through development”, which means the “economic development constitutes a key component of the long-term solutions to humanitarian situation” (Gong, 2021a). Thus, in practices, there is no clearly boundary between humanitarian aid and development aid in China. The approach of Chinese humanitarian actions is development-oriented. In this context, China has gradually added the new category of “non-emergency humanitarian aid” to the original connotation of humanitarian aid. More correctly, China’s humanitarian assistance now includes two major aspects: emergency humanitarian assistance and non-emergency humanitarian assistance. Emergency humanitarian assistance includes emergency material assistance in the event of natural disasters or human-made conflicts, spot assistance, food aid and dispatch of rescue teams, as well as medical assistance and dispatch of medical teams for public health emergencies. Non-emergency humanitarian assistance includes long-term rehabilitation and reconstruction, long-term enhancement of disaster prevention and mitigation capacities and long-term improvement and mitigation of refugee migration crises. In this process, China’s concept and approach of promoting development through disaster relief and preventing disasters through development has enriched the current framework of humanitarian theory and practical experience. The second one is going to talk about the moral ideas or idealistic intentions of humanitarian actions. In the context of the Western humanitarianism, it contains the norms of “humanity”, “compassion”, “moral obligation” and “helping”. These discourses shape humanitarianism in the West, which generate “a feeling of identification and sympathy that demands some reasonable and effective action as a response to suffering” (Slim, 2015). From my analysis, these norms also consists of the Chinese humanitarianism, but they are not enough to explain the humanitarian actions by Chinese state and Chinese NGOs. In my findings, the language of friendship conveying the concern with care, duty and empathy to the Others when they are in the suffering. It also links to the notion of solidarity (Devere & Smith, 2010), which plays a significant role in the discourse of Chinese humanitarianism. This spirit of solidarity emanates not only from a shared vulnerability to natural disasters but also from a shared commitment to equality, sovereign integrity, and noninterference, which is a crucial element of the worldview of many developing and non-Western societies(Hirono, 2013; Latief, 2013; Osa, 2012). Practically, the discourses of international humanitarianism spirit and friendship are frequently mentioned together in order to explain

the reason for humanitarian actions by China. The third one is talking about the emerging humanitarian role of Chinese NGOs from the practical perspective. From the analysis, we found more and more Chinese NGOs are raising the fund by their own and transfer their successful domestical relief experience into Africa and expanding their role in the refugee response arena. The cooperation among the Western NGOs, Chinese NGOs and the local African NGOs, is making the aid more efficient and reinforcing complementary advantages. Next, we discuss how the emerging Chinese humanitarianism challenge the contemporary globally humanitarianism? It is obviously to conclude from my findings that there are multiple interest-based motives for increasing Chinese humanitarianism globally, particularly in Africa. As we have mentioned before, the Western humanitarianism, which is rooted in Western history and globalized in ways that were largely responsive to interests and ideas emanating from the West. While, Chinese humanitarianism, besides its genuine desire we have discussed already, is also a strong tool to further consolidate its status as a major international power, especially a responsible one. The state-centric and development-oriented approach has enabled China to materialize its comparative advantage in capacity and resources (Gong, 2021a), and trying to prove its approach as a robust alternative to the existing ones. China's anti-epidemic efforts around the world are the best case in point. Chinese President Xi Jinping said at the opening ceremony of the video conference of the 73rd World Health Assembly on May 18, 2020 that China will cooperate with the United Nations to set up a global humanitarian emergency warehouse and hub in China, strive to ensure the supply chain of anti-epidemic supplies, and establish a green channel for transportation and customs clearance; and will also establish a cooperation mechanism for 30 China-Africa counterparts to accelerate the construction of the headquarters of the African Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and help Africa improve its disease prevention and control capacity. In addition, by May 27, 2021, the Chinese government has provided a number of batches of emergency supplies and vaccine assistance to African countries, dispatched expert groups on anti-epidemic medical care to 15 African countries, cooperated with 43 hospitals in 38 African countries, and trained more than 20,000 local medical personnel. The Chinese Government has repeated on many important occasions the important role of WHO in the international fight against the epidemic. The active participation and follow-up of the Chinese Government are in sharp contrast to the announcement of the withdrawal of the United States from

WHO, through which China intends to strengthen its voice in the field of humanitarian assistance and thereby strengthen its position in the international community. At present, many researchers talk about one problem when they do research on the influence of China's humanitarian aid: there are not many NGOs participating in international humanitarian aid in China. They argue that the problem will affect China's humanitarian impact on the global humanitarian landscape (Gong, 2021a). Because China's preference for bilateralism over multilateralism in humanitarian action in some cases can lead to questions over the legitimacy of their humanitarian action, as bilateral aid from more powerful states tends to be viewed with suspicion (.Ibid). While my research can make up for their lack of these studies. From my research, although there are far fewer Chinese NGOs than Western NGOs, there are already several well-established international Chinese NGOs that provide humanitarian assistance globally, and these NGOs are attracting and helping more Chinese NGOs to respond to global humanitarian problems. Increasing internationalization and more and more Chinese NGOs will have an impact on the current Western NGO-led humanitarianism by exporting their humanitarian ideas and practices. Hasmath and Hsu's research confirmed this point. In their research, they summary that "once Chinese social organizations have established a more long-term presence in host jurisdictions, via funded projects and/or programming, such organizations will be influence agents of export when it comes to operational practices, norms, values, norms and expected organizational behaviour". According to Zhang, during the Covid-19 pandemic, Chinese NGOs have played a critical role in China's response, providing support to over 109 countries on six continents by March 2020 (Zhang, 2020). Their influence has been on the Chinese government's radar for nearly a year or two, and the government has reversed its previous policy of funding Chinese NGOs through BRI and South-South Cooperation platforms. These Chinese NGOs, along with the Chinese government, are bound to have a major impact on the current humanitarian framework.

10. CONCLUSION

The paper explores the increasing role of Chinese NGOs, particularly the frontier organization CFPA, in Africa through a detailed analysis of their evolution and involvement in humanitarian and development aid practices. This offers a fresh perspective on Sino-Africa relations and the

global humanitarianism system. In my analysis, the rising role of Chinese NGOs in Africa is having a significant impact on Sino-Africa relations and the global humanitarian system. On the one hand, the involvement of Chinese NGOs in humanitarian aid and development assistance projects in Africa builds a more balanced and mutually beneficial relationship between China and Africa countries, serving as a means to enhance China's soft power and protect its interests in Africa, and reinforcing its goal of becoming a leading humanitarian power. On the other hand, the presence of growing Chinese NGOs is changing the dynamics of the international humanitarian system through their active participation and collaboration with African, Western, and UN organizations, contributing to new discourses and practices in aid and relief efforts.

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