5.12 Wenchuan earthquake recovery: Government policies and NGO’s participation

Huang Yunong
Zhou Linlin
Wei Kenan

Dec. 14 2009
Outline

☐ 5.12 Wenchuan earthquake
☐ Governments’ policies for recovery
☐ NGO’s participation in recovery
☐ Discussion
☐ Recommendations and conclusion
5.12 Wenchuan earthquake

- Measure: 8.0 on the Richter scale
- Time: 2:28 PM, May 12, 2008
- Epicenter: Wenchuan County, Ngawa Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture, 80 km west/northwest of Sichuan provincial capital city of Chengdu
- Damage: 69,226 known deaths, 17,923 people were listed as missing, 374,643 injured, and others.
Governments’ policies for recovery (emergency management system)

- **China’s emergency management system**: central leadership, departmental responsibility, and disaster administration at different levels with major responsibility on local authorities.

- **Laws and regulations** for the legal basis of system: the Emergency Response Law of PRC, Flood Control Law of PRC, etc.

- **Emergency plans** in the sustainable development strategies at the national level: the Disaster Reduction Plan of the PRC (1998-2010), The National 11th Five-year Plan on Comprehensive Disaster Reduction, etc.
Governments’ policies for recovery (central government)

- 5.12 Wenchuan earthquake: a level I emergency response implemented by the State Council
- The Regulations on Post-Wenchuan Earthquake Restoration and Reconstruction: guidelines for restoration and reconstruction (8 June 2008)
- The Paired Assistance Program for Post-Wenchuan Earthquake Restoration and Reconstruction: 19 provinces establish one-to-one paired relations with a specific one of the 19 most severely affected counties (11 June 2008)
- Other policies: Working Programs of State Planning for Post-Wenchuan Earthquake Restoration and Reconstruction, etc.
Governments’ policies for recovery (local government)

- Policies were largely based on the opinions, rules, and regulations set by central government, e.g., The Sichuan Provincial People’s Government’s Support for Opinions of the State Council on the Policies and Regulations for Supporting Post-Wenchuan Earthquake Restoration and Reconstruction:
Governments’ policies for recovery

- Mainly focused on physical restoration and reconstruction
- Little attention paid to social recovery such as empowering local communities through promoting self-help groups among disaster-affected people in the government policies
NGO’s participation in recovery (the research)

- The research conducted in 39 severe earthquake-affected counties in Sichuan province from late July to early August 2009

- **Research Questions:**  
  1) what services did NGOs provide in post-disaster recovery?  
  2) where did the money come from to finance NGOs?  
  3) were staff members satisfied with their organizations’ operation in disaster-affected areas?  
  4) what difficulties or challenges did NGOs encounter in disaster-affected areas?  
  5) what models for post-disaster recovery as perceived by NGOs’ staff members were effective?
NGO’s participation in recovery (the research)

- **Methods**: both quantitative and qualitative research methods
- **Ten research groups**: 10 groups, each group consisted of one professor who was sociology or social work teacher and two postgraduate students with social research training
- **Quantitative research**: 149 NGOs
- **Qualitative research**: 37 out of the 149 NGOs
NGO’s participation in recovery (the research)

- **Methods**: both quantitative and qualitative research methods
- **Ten research groups**: each group consisted of one professor who was sociology or social work teacher and two postgraduate students with social research training
- **Quantitative research**: 149 NGOs
- **Qualitative research**: 37 out of the 149 NGOs
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Provided</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing services to children</td>
<td>60.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing services to the youth</td>
<td>53.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting and consoling</td>
<td>51.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological counseling</td>
<td>45.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizing donation activities</td>
<td>43.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing services to the elderly</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigating disaster information</td>
<td>36.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training services</td>
<td>34.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing service to women</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivering donated money or goods</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NGO’s participation in recovery

(The NGOs’ involvement in earthquake assistance N =149)

☐ Providing assistance to the wounded or the disabled 27.5%
☐ Mediating family or neighborhood relationships 26.8%
☐ Medical services 26.8%
☐ Emergency settlement 24.8%
☐ Providing employment counseling or training 21.5%
☐ Community economic development 20.1%
☐ Environment protection 19.5%
☐ Building or repairing house 16.8%
☐ School reconstruction 16.1%
☐ Handling the matters related to victims 10.1%
☐ Others 6.0%
NGO’s participation in recovery
(The financial resources of NGOs N =149)

- Donation from NGO staff members: 37.6%
- Domestic foundations: 30.2%
- Private donation: 27.5%
- Oversea foundations: 26.2%
- Fund for the subordinates from the group: 21.5%
- Enterprises: 20.1%
- Governments: 18.1%
- Others: 3.4%
NGO’s participation in recovery
(Staff members’ satisfaction with their organizations’ operation)

- **Internal management (N=148)**
  - TS  S  N  D  TD
  - 27.7%  62.2%  8.1%  1.3%  0.7%

- **Professionalism of employees (N=147)**
  - TS  S  N  D  TD
  - 19.7%  60.5%  19.0%  0.7%  -

- **Effectiveness of services (N=148)**
  - TS  S  N  D  TD
  - 24.3%  61.5%  13.5%  0.7%  -

- **Interaction with other NGOs (N=147)**
  - TS  S  N  D  TD
  - 25.2%  40.1%  30.0%  4.1%  -
NGO’s participation in recovery
(Staff members’ satisfaction with their organizations’ operation)

- Interaction with local government (N=147)
  - TS: 20.4%
  - S: 44.2%
  - N: 32.7%
  - D: 2.7%
  - TD: -

- Interaction with volunteers (N=147)
  - TS: 25.2%
  - S: 42.2%
  - N: 30.8%
  - D: 2.0%
  - TD: -

- Local government’s support (N=149)
  - TS: 22.1%
  - S: 41.8%
  - N: 29.5%
  - D: 6.0%
  - TD: 0.7%

- Policies & laws related to NGO (N=147)
  - TS: 12.9%
  - S: 41.5%
  - N: 31.3%
  - D: 13.6%
  - TD: 0.7%
NGO’s participation in recovery

(Difficulties or challenges that NGOs encounter N =149)

- Shortage of funds: 53.7%
- Shortage of human resources: 38.9%
- Lack of integration of resources among NGOs: 34.9%
- Lack of office space: 28.9%
- Shortage of professional knowledge: 28.9%
- Interaction with local government: 22.8%
- Ambiguity of policies and laws: 21.5%
- Lack of people’s acknowledgement: 3.4%
- Internal management: 2.7%
- Others: 4.0%
NGO’s participation in recovery
(Qualitative results: staff members’ self-evaluation about NGOs’ services)

- Services satisfied some needs of the people in earthquake-affected areas and contributed to the post-disaster recovery

  “I feel that our service have some certain positive outcomes for post-disaster recovery. The local people also acknowledge our work.” (organization 6)

  “Our services are acknowledged by the people ... actually, we also help to relieve governments’ stress in post-disaster recovery.” (organization 29)

- Services were not acknowledged by local people

  “The concern of the foundation which provides financial support to us is not consistent with the needs of local people. As a result, it seems that our services are not consistent with local people’s concerns.” (organization 2)
NGO’s participation in recovery

(Qualitative results: the main difficulties or challenges)

- Shortage of financial resources, lack of office space, shortage of human resources, and the interaction with local government

“Our organization face some difficulties. First, there is the shortage of human resources... second, we do not have enough fund... third, we can only provide services to a few people, however some other people also want our services... fourth ... we do not have the office at present and can only rent local people’s house to provide services.” (organization 6)
NGO’s participation in recovery
(Qualitative results: staff members’ perceptions of effective model for post-disaster services)

- The first theme emphasized the coordination and cooperation among government, NOGs, and local people
- The second theme focused on community work
- The third theme emphasized the importance of coordination among different professionals
- The fourth theme is about the government contracting for purchase of social services
Discussion

- The post-Wenchuan earthquake recovery was characteristic of strong central government control and weak NGO participation
Discussion

- First, China's has a centralized political system
- Second, the central government controlled the majority of national revenue
- Third, China’s overall NGO sector is weak
Recommendations and conclusion

- China’s emergency management system may need to be changed from the model of central government domination and direct orders to the models that emphasize local governments and NGOs’ participation, cooperation, and coordination.

- Central government needs to change policies to promote the development of NGOs, so that they will be able to bridge the critical gap in service delivery that in emergencies is not met by government agencies.
Recommendations and conclusion

- A brief description of governments’ policies for post-Wenchuan earthquake recovery and a report on NGOs’ participation in post-Wenchuan earthquake recovery
- Post-Wenchuan earthquake recovery was characteristic of strong central government control and weak NGO participation
- Possible reasons: China’s centralized political system, the control of the majority of national revenue by central government, and limited political space for the growth of NGOs in China
- Recommendation: recovery model emphasizes both local governments’ and NGOs’ participation, cooperation and coordination. China’s governments actively promote the development of NGOs.
The end.

Thank you!