

# Chapter 16

## Policy Recommendations on Construction of NGO Talent Cultivation System

Ming Wang

Strengthening talent construction is one of the momentous moves to implement the Scientific Outlook on Development and better implement the strategy of reinvigorating the country through talents. NGO-related talents are an essential part of China's talent teams. It is stated in *China's Medium- and Long-Term Talent Development Plan* that "policies will be implemented to encourage the development of non-public ownership economic organizations and new NGO-related talents" and "the development of non-public ownership economic organizations and new NGO talents will be included into the talent development plans of governments at all levels. Opinions will be formulated to strengthen non-public ownership economic organizations and new NGO talent teams". In view of the status quo of and major problems in China's NGO-related talent cultivation at the current stage, and with reference to the core ideas and key points of the Plans on Talent Development, the author puts forward several policy recommendations in this proposal, with the aim of establishing a sound NGO-related talent cultivation system.

After more than three decades of development since reform and opening up, the past decade in particular, China's NGOs have gradually proceeded from the initial period to a relatively mature new period of stable development. NGOs have begun to assume such functions as serving people's livelihood, expressing public opinion, safeguarding citizens' rights and advocating democracy. As NGOs seek to develop themselves by making innovations in the course of reforms, its organizational and institutional advantages come to manifest themselves. A new pattern for social management innovation and social construction is taking shape. In this new system, NGOs of various kinds are the principal parts. However, China's NGO development is still faced with various restrictions. Among them, the very crux is the lack of a sound, reasonable and sustainable NGO-related talent cultivation system. At present, China's NGO-related talent cultivation system has many prominent

---

M. Wang (✉)

School of Public Policy and Management, Tsinghua University, Beijing, China  
e-mail: oumei@tsinghua.edu.cn

problems, most of which are manifested in the following three aspects: **first, the diploma-oriented education system for NGO-related majors is yet to be established.** As a conventional talent cultivation mode, diploma-oriented education features long-term effectiveness and wide-ranging influences. At present, there is still no NGO-related majors in the major directories for graduates from higher vocational colleges, or with bachelor degrees or above in the national diploma-oriented education system. There are only several colleges and universities which have set up the division of “NGO management” under the major of “Public Affairs Management” in an attempt to make explorations in the cultivation of NGO-related talents. The multi-tiered talent cultivation system oriented to such degrees as vocational college, bachelor, master and doctor is far from being established; **second, the occupational training system for employees working in NGOs is incomplete.** At present, government departments, educational departments and NGOs, principally the Ministry of Civil Affairs and Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, colleges, universities and research institutions, and support-type institutions respectively, have preliminarily formed a NGO on-the-job training system, but there still exist many urgent issues to be addressed. Different training subjects are in want of coordinating and docking mechanisms in such aspects as training contents, training time and training methods. There is also no system in place to track, test and evaluate the results of training. This has led to universal duplicate training or ineffective training, and has greatly wasted various resources for NGO-related talent cultivation and training; **third, the channel for NGO-related talents to integrate diploma-oriented education training with on-the-job training has not yet to be established.** The strength of diploma-oriented education is systematic learning of theories, while the strength of on-the-job training is practical exercise. So diploma-oriented education needs to be verified and improved through practice, and on-the-job training cannot be separated from systematic learning of theories. Both of them support and complement each other. Currently, the diploma-oriented education system for NGO-related talents is yet to be established and the corresponding on-the-job training system, though constructed, is irregular. On the whole, a mutually supportive and complementary NGO-related talent cultivation system has not been established.

In view of the aforementioned, I hereby put forward the following policy recommendations to help establish a complete NGO-related talent cultivation system:

(I) Implement the Medium-and Long-Term Plans on NGO-Related Talents

In line with the requirements of *China's Medium-and Long-term Talent Development Plan*, and against the background of reform of NGO management system, we should concentrate on making innovations in systems, mechanisms and policies, so as to foster a moderately-sized outstanding NGO-related talent team with an optimized structure and reasonable layout. We should include NGO-related talents into the overall talent cultivation plans of different places, include these talents into the national professional and technical personnel knowledge renewal projects and national high-skill talents revitalization plans and work out *China's*

*Plans on NGO-related Talents Development.* Finally, we will strive to form a wide-ranging NGO-related talent network in the coming decade, so as to provide talent guarantee and intellectual guarantee for better leveraging NGO's positive roles in promoting social management innovations..

(II) Set up NGO-Related Majors and Improve Diploma-Oriented Education System

NGO-related talent cultivation is a systematic engineering, and can be realized through multiple approaches. Diploma-oriented education is a conventional talent training mode, and features long duration and systematic knowledge impartment. By revising and improving the *Academic Degree Awarding and Talent Cultivation Discipline List* formulated by the Academic Degree Committee of the State Council and the Ministry of Education, we can set up the second-level major list "NGO management" under the first-level discipline "Public Management" of the category of "Management" in the major setup for bachelor degree education in China's institutes of higher learning, and gradually establish a talent cultivation system which covers different levels such as higher vocational education, bachelor, master and doctor degrees. We should also improve the project-based course system featuring integration of "the post, the course and the certificate". Such course systems will focus on capacity cultivation through basic means of professional teaching and be principally conducted with work requirements in mind.

(III) Regulate and Improve the (NGO) In-service Staff Training System

Besides the diploma-oriented education in colleges and universities, professional training is also an essential and organic part of NGO-related professional talent cultivation. Professional training features short duration and high frequency. Unlike education in institutions of higher learning, agency-centered professional training lays more emphasis on practice, and can meet the needs of relevant personnel working in NGOs in society. It is suggested to gradually regulate and improve the system for training course development and management, training certification, training results management, so as to avoid duplicate training and useless training. Meanwhile, volunteer practice is a salutary supplement to NGO-related specialized talent training. Those who are keen on public welfare programs can realize their ideals for public good through volunteer training, volunteer practice and experience. We should further explore means for management of volunteers and strengthen construction of volunteer bases, so as to enable them to become the cradle for cultivating NGO-related specialized talents.

(IV) Perfect NGO-Related Professional Qualification Certification System, and Promote the Practice of Working with Certificates and Professional Title Appraisal

At present, compared with government agencies, enterprises and public institutions, NGO-related industry has a lower access threshold, employees in the industry have a weaker awareness of their identity, and there is no scientific and standardized

NGO-related qualification appraisal mechanism. These have greatly affected the career development prospects and occupational attraction. It is suggested to further standardize and specify position setup for NGO-related full-time employees, establish the NGO-related professional system, and perfect the further education system for NGO-related talents, so as to better connect professional talent cultivation with professional qualifications. Given that NGO-related occupations such as “fundraisers” and “membership managers” were included in the 2013 version of *National Occupational Classification Codes*, we should further supplement and perfect NGO-related professional qualification certification system. We should also coordinate as soon as possible with relevant departments to promote professional title appraisal for NGO-related talents to enhance NGO-related employees’ professional identity and give preference to those who work with certificates in terms of wage treatment and social welfare. In some NGOs) where conditions are met, we can try to gain some experience by carrying out pilot projects in NGO-related professional title appraisal, in a bid to lay a foundation for nationwide implementation of professional title appraisal for NGOs in the future.