

Termination of NGO Alliances in China: Typology and Determinants

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The Rise of Nonprofit Alliances

- * Definition of alliance: “a strategic restructuring that includes a commitment to continue for the foreseeable future, shared or transferred decision-making power, and some type of formal agreement” (Kohm, Piana, & Gowdy 2000).
- * Forms: conference, association, federation, league, alliance, union, council, consortium and network.
- * Type: administrative consolidation and joint programming (Kohm, Piana, & Gowdy 2000); task-oriented and process-oriented alliances (McLaughlin 2010); Intra-sectoral and inter-sectoral alliances (Berger 2004; Gazley 2007);
- * Alliances are widely used in fundraising, service delivery, and policy advocacy
- * Alliance dissolution

Termination of Interorganizational Collaboration

- * Political alliances: the impact of the environmental uncertainty and coalition leaders (Bennett 1997; Lupia & Strom 1995; Narud 1995);
- * Business alliances: internal governance (Das and Teng 1999; Park and Ungson 2001; Serapio & Cascio 1996).
- * Nonprofit alliances: both the environment and internal governance (Berger 2004; Dutting & Sugge 2010; Lowndes & Skelcher 1998; Murray 1998)
- * Limitations of current literature

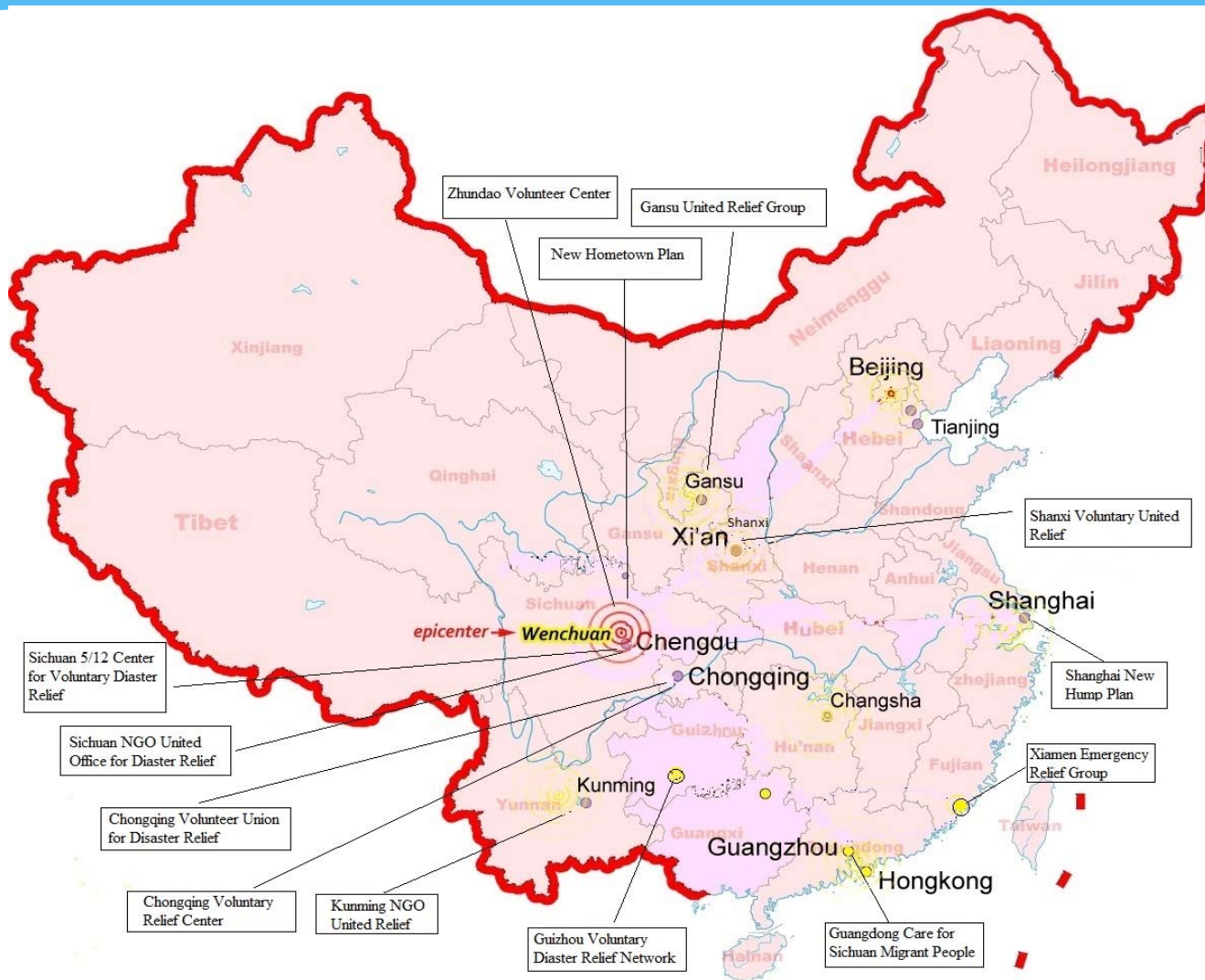
Research Questions

- * Why do nonprofit organizations build alliances in disaster management?
- * How are nonprofit alliances terminated?
- * What factors cause the termination of nonprofit alliances?

Methods and Data

- * Research method: multiple case study
- * Sample: all 13 NGO alliances for the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake relief
- * Selection criteria: inclusion and exclusion
- * Data collection: participant and nonparticipant observation, interview, and document studies
- * The role of the researcher

NGO Alliances for the Sichuan Earthquake Relief



Patterns of Alliance Termination

Termination Pattern	Termination Time (after the disaster)	Alliance Characteristics	Approach	Alliances
Termination at birth	1-2 week	Outside earthquake-hit areas Composed of grassroots NGOs	Automatic dissolution in failed collective actions	KUR GCSMP CVRC
Abrupt termination	2-4 weeks	Majority members outside earthquake-hit areas Composed of grassroots NGOs	Immediate dissolution after the end of emergency aid	SUO SNHP XERG GURG CVFDR
Failed transition	2-12 months	Based in or close to earthquake-hit areas Led by influential NGOs	Unexpected dissolution after the failure of institutionalizing partnerships for post-disaster recovery	GVDRN SVUR ZVC
Alliance evolution	3 years	Engaged by local NGOs Restructured after emergency relief Engaged in multiple networks	An independent NGO was established to replace the alliance	NHP CVDR

Determinants for Alliance Termination

- * Political pressure: (a) legislative restrictions, registration control, and unofficial regulations; (b) limited access to disaster management for NGOs; (c) administrative control, supplanting, incorporation, and ostracization
- * Resource shortage for staff, administrative, and project expenses
- * Short-term orientation owing to geographical distance and conflict of work areas
- * Leadership failure: (a) partner misfit in terms of resource, strategy, and mission); (b) governance failure (shared governance, lead organization, and administrative organization); (c) less capable individual leaders (leadership skills, personal networks, and prestige)

Patterns and Determinants

Pattern of Termination	Political Pressure	Resource Shortage	Short-Term Orientation	Leadership Failure
Failure at Birth		×		×
Abrupt Dissolution	×	×	×	
Failed Transition	×	×		×
Evolution into Independent NGOs		×		×

Practical Application of Research

- * Both environmental risks and failed internal governance led to the dissolution of nonprofit alliances
- * The role of voluntary termination, mission misfit, and internal rivalry
- * For nonprofit practitioners: (a) interactions between the environment and activists; (b) durability and successfulness; (c) leadership challenges

Suggestions for Future Research

- * Examining nonprofit alliances in democratic societies
- * Examining theme-based alliances
- * Extending analysis from the alliance level to the organization member level