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<tr>
<td><strong>Author(s)</strong></td>
<td>Jordan, LP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Citation</strong></td>
<td>The 2013 International Conference on Collaboration Among Government, Market, and Society: Forging Partnerships and Encouraging Competition, Fudan University, Shanghai, China, 26-27 May 2013.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Issued Date</strong></td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>URL</strong></td>
<td><a href="http://hdl.handle.net/10722/215768">http://hdl.handle.net/10722/215768</a></td>
</tr>
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A Conceptual Framework of Local Government and Third Sector Responses to Labor Migration in the PRC

Dr Lucy P Jordan

26-27 May 2013

International Conference on Collaboration among Government, Market, and Society: Forging Partnerships and Encouraging Competition, Shanghai, PRC
Social protection & migration

- Government
- Civil Society/NPOs
- Industry/Employers
- Civil Society/NPOs
Population changes

• Increased life expectancy
• Below replacement fertility
• Rising inequality
• Urbanization

(Peng, 2011)
Migration is one of the important drivers of transformation in economic and social conditions in 21st century China. Over 260 million Chinese people are migrants living in an area that is different from their Hukou registration. Disruption of family and local social protection structures.
Social protection in China

• The logic of place based protection
  – Hukou
  – Work unit
  – Harmonization?

• Impacts of economic reform

• Local government responsibility
Local variation

• MLSS (Minimum Living Standards Schemes)
  – Experimentation from 1993 to national legislation in 1999 based on ‘best practices’

• Experimentation with migrant populations
  – Including healthcare, pension, unemployment insurance, occupational injury insurance and maternity benefit
  – Wide variation >> economics, inequality (Shi 2012b)
Productivist-developmental state?

- Subordination of social policy to economic policy (Holliday, 2000)
- Reliance on family
- “disappearing of productivist elements and the rapid rising of the universal features of a modern welfare state… [with] … civil society emerg[ing] as a strong competitor to the state in determining the path of welfare reform” (author emphasis added) (Kim, 2008:120).
Policy Packages of Support

Commitment

Adequacy

Inclusion

Program rules, availability, accessibility, eligibility, entitlement

Generosity of benefits

Coverage of potential population

(Meyers et al., 2002:96-97)
Regional characteristics, e.g., urban-rural harmonization, poverty threshold, variation in local taxation, intra- and inter-provincial migration, level of industrialization

Population characteristics, e.g., migrant, low-income, age distribution, levels of inequality

Policy Packages of Support

Commitment

Adequacy

Inclusion

Type of industry, domestic, foreign investment SO/COE

Civil Society/NGOs

Municipal Government

Industry/Employers