

Grass-roots NGOs and the growth of civil society in China

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Abstract: The article argues that China's civil society organisations are, in fact, dwelling in a proto-civil society. Grass-root NGOs are facing difficulties in five areas, namely, in legality, human resources, capital, entrustment and know-how. By presenting two case studies of voluntary organisations based in Shanghai and Guangzhou respectively, the author investigates the ways in which grass-roots NGO activists establish norms, draw up their development strategies and construct an organisational framework. The article then focuses on how these NGOs and the volunteerism of their members can help overcome difficulties, and what their contribution is to the growth and development of China's civil society.

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