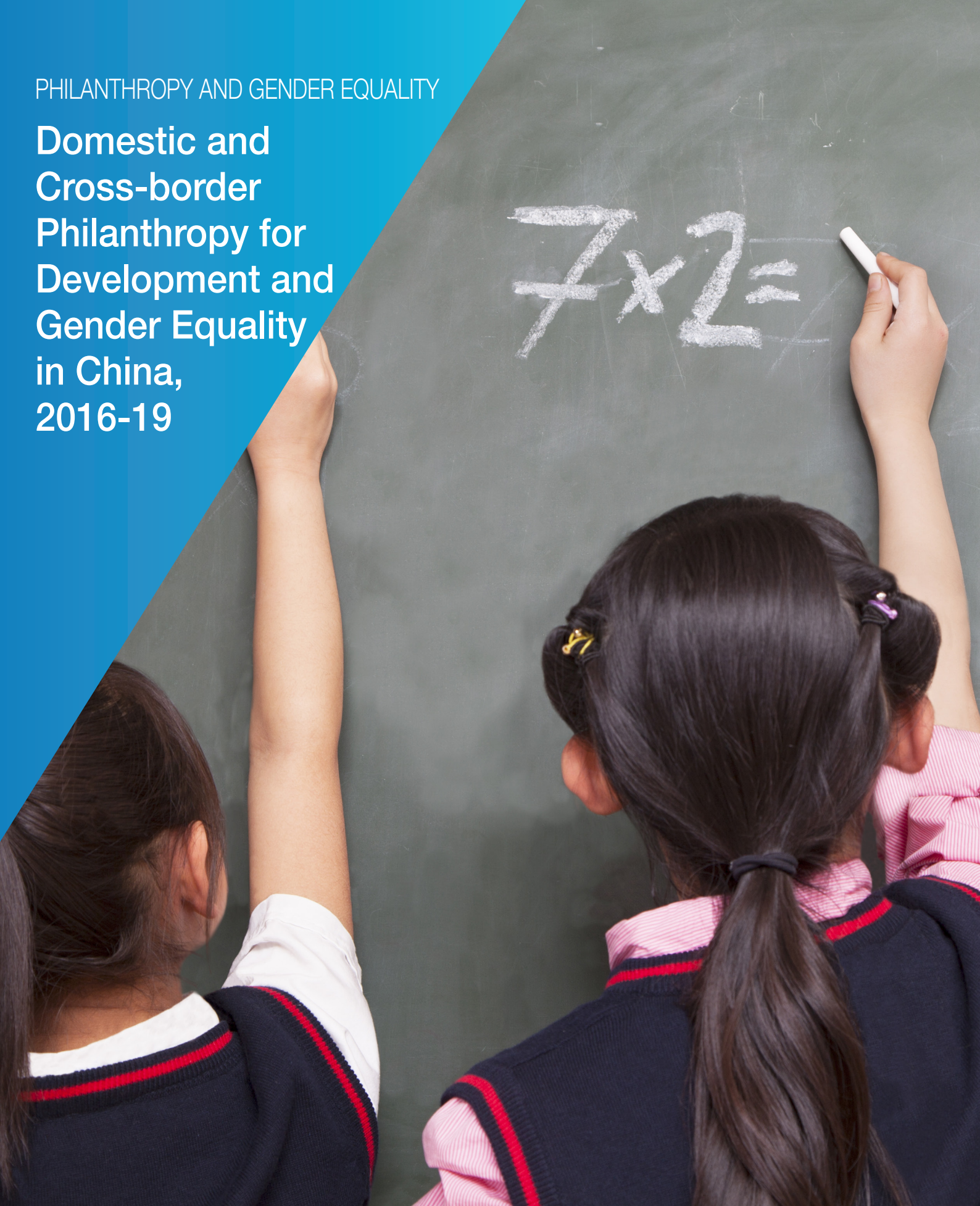


PHILANTHROPY AND GENDER EQUALITY

Domestic and
Cross-border
Philanthropy for
Development and
Gender Equality
in China,
2016-19


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OECD CENTRE ON PHILANTHROPY
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**Domestic and Cross-border
Philanthropy for Development
and Gender Equality in China,
2016-19**

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Foreword

The report is part of the OECD Centre on Philanthropy's research in emerging economies, including Colombia, Nigeria, India and South Africa. These studies aim to shed light on the contribution of domestic philanthropy to development, and to offer recommendations to address critical issues in development.

The report was written under the guidance of Bathylle Missika, Head of the Networks, Partnerships and Gender Division at the OECD Development Centre. It was prepared by Nelson Amaya, Policy Analyst for the OECD Centre on Philanthropy, with drafting support from Sarah Stummbillig, Francesca Livraghi, Rebecca Cambrini, Rossana Tatulli and Madeleine Lessard. We would also like to thank Henri-Bernard Solignac-Lecomte, Mélodie Descours and Delphine Grandrieux from the Development Communications team for design and editorial contributions.

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Abbreviations

BMGF	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CRS	Creditor Reporting System (OECD)
CSO	Civil society organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
DEV	Development Centre (OECD)
GDP	Gross domestic product
GNI	Gross national income
NPO	Non-profit organisation
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SA	Social association
SIGI	Social Institutions and Gender Index (OECD)
SSO	Social service organisation
USD	United States dollar

Currency conversions

Throughout this report, unless otherwise stated, nominal end-of-year exchange rates are used to convert China yuan Renminbi (CNY) to United States dollars (USD) (OECD, 2020^[1]), Consumer Price Index annual change in China and the deflator for constant 2019 USD as follows:

Table A. Exchange rates and Consumer Price Index applicable to China

Year	CNY – USD Nominal end-of-period exchange rate	Consumer Price Index in China (annual percentage change)	USD CPI deflator (2019=1.00)
2015	6.49	1.4	0.92
2016	6.95	2.0	0.94
2017	6.51	1.6	0.95
2018	6.85	2.1	0.97
2019	6.99	2.9	1.00

Source: (OECD, 2022^[2]).

Executive summary

This study evaluates the scope and dimension of large-scale philanthropy in the People’s Republic of China (hereafter “China”) over 2016-19. More specifically, it compares the financing provided by large cross-border philanthropic organisations with contributions from large philanthropic organisations operating domestically. The domestic philanthropic sector has experienced a significant expansion in recent years: rapid economic growth in China and the increasing concentration of private wealth allowed the Chinese private sector and high net-worth individuals to expand their support to social organisations.

Domestic philanthropy is significantly larger than cross-border philanthropy to China. Over 2016-19, domestic philanthropy from large donors stood at USD 2.7 billion, while large international donors provided USD 0.4 billion. The top five domestic donors contributed 50% of all domestic financing, suggesting a high concentration of domestic philanthropy among a few organisations. Tencent Charity Foundation was the largest domestic donor identified in the sample with USD 92 million per year on average. Meanwhile, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation was the top international donor with USD 22.5 million per year on average.

Domestic and cross-border philanthropy in China show both differences and similarities in terms of sectoral allocation. The top financed sector, overall and domestically, was education. This sector received USD 760 million over 2016-19, predominately from domestic donors. Health and reproductive health followed with USD 561 million in total, contributed by both domestic and cross-border philanthropy. However, domestic donors focused their efforts mostly on basic health care and nutrition, while cross-border donors mostly targeted health policy and administrative management. Interestingly, cross-border philanthropy invested significantly in the energy sector (and especially in renewable resources), while little to no financing came from domestic donors in this sector.

Domestic financing with a disclosed geographic scope is concentrated in a few Chinese provinces. Nearly three-quarters (71%) of identified domestic philanthropic flows, amounting to USD 2 billion, have a national or non-disclosed geographical scope. Of the remaining USD 793 million, the study estimates that Guangdong received USD 202 million (25%), Shanghai received USD 139 million (18%), and Beijing USD 123 million (16%).

Between 2016 and 2019, domestic funding towards gender equality in China amounted to USD 31 million, less than 1% of all funding from large donors. This is in line with the level identified in other large emerging economies (including India) over 2016-19. However, the share is lower relative to average international levels, which stood at 8% in the same period (OECD, 2021^[3]). Most philanthropic financing for the promotion of gender equality was allocated to reproductive health care (USD 19 million), followed by support to women’s rights organisations (USD 10 million). Family planning and ending violence against women and girls received only small amounts (USD 3 million in total). Aiyou Foundation was the largest domestic philanthropic donor for the promotion of gender equality (USD 8 million), while The PepsiCo Foundation was the top cross-border donor in this area (USD 3 million).

Based on these results, this report makes the following recommendations.

For cross-border philanthropy

Build partnership networks with Chinese donors. Cross-border foundations working in China stand to gain in both knowledge and potential partnerships with domestic funders by building bridges with foundations already working in the same areas. Easily accessible and up-to-date data on philanthropic funding are critical to this end, as they enable both cross-border and domestic donors to find complementary funding priorities. There is room for enhanced collaboration between domestic and cross-border donors on issues related to health and the reproductive health sector in particular – an area that both types of funders are heavily invested in.

Diversify the sectoral allocation of resources relative to domestic philanthropists. Based on the philanthropic flows identified in this report, the priorities of domestic and cross-border foundations overlap in terms of the allocation of resources in a limited number of sectors. For example, only international donors invest in the energy sector, while the priority of domestic philanthropists is education.

For domestic philanthropy

Improve efforts to disclose the geographical allocation of domestic philanthropic funding. This study could not identify 71% of domestic financing from a geographical point of view because it was classified with a national or non-disclosed geographical scope. While foundations are legally required to disclose the geographical allocation of their funding, large funders do not report this information in detail. Additional detailed information on the geographical allocation of domestic funding would equip the Chinese philanthropic sector to improve its allocation strategy and therefore its effectiveness. Researchers too could benefit from more detailed geographical information; this could help philanthropic organisations understand how to redirect their sources towards the highest likely impact.

Expand financing for the promotion of gender equality to address issues that are receiving limited funding, such as ending violence against women and girls. The study highlights that over 2016-19 only USD 31 million, or less than 1% of all funding from large donors, targeted gender equality in China. These resources were lower than average international levels. Moreover, they were also mostly channelled through efforts to support reproductive health care and through women's rights organisations. Philanthropic organisations could align with other initiatives, such as the government-supported China Women's Development Foundation to provide more resources to end violence against women and girls, which remains an underfunded channel.

1. Objectives and methodology

Background and objective

Modern philanthropy in the People's Republic of China (hereafter "China") has grown rapidly and is expanding both domestically and abroad. With rapid domestic economic growth over the past decades, and increasing private wealth concentration, the Chinese private sector and high net-worth individuals are fuelling an expansion of the philanthropic sector. However, information about domestic foundations is not easily accessible, only available in Chinese or not publicly available as open data.¹

This report aims to close the knowledge gap on large-scale domestic philanthropy in China, comparing its activities and financing with cross-border foundations operating in the country. The comparison between cross-border and domestic philanthropic organisations helps determine priority sectors and thematic areas by each category of funders. As such, it allows for better understanding of how philanthropic funding from within China is allocated across provinces. Moreover, the report also zooms in on philanthropic support to gender equality.

The study aims for a better grasp on how philanthropy has evolved in recent years, and how it compares to cross-border philanthropy. To that end, the OECD Centre on Philanthropy collected and analysed programmatic data from 62 large domestic foundations in China. It also explored OECD data from 45 cross-border foundations active in China (OECD, 2021^[4]). Comparing cross-border and domestic philanthropy in this way helped better understand their respective scope, scale, and complementarities.

The research is part of a broader initiative by the OECD Centre on Philanthropy to shed light on the evolution of domestic philanthropy in emerging markets. The initiative gives a specific focus to gender equality and its contribution to development, and offers recommendations to address critical issues in Agenda 2030 (OECD, 2021^[3]).

Definitions, sample and survey uptake

For the purpose of this research, **private philanthropy for development** is defined as transactions from the private or non-profit sector having the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as their main objective, and which originate from foundations' own sources such as endowments; donations from companies or individuals (including crowdfunding); legacies; and income from royalties; investments (including government securities); dividends; lotteries and similar. In addition, private philanthropy for development also includes financing towards basic or applied research that directly benefits developing countries, or indirectly benefits developing countries through global public goods (OECD, 2021, p. 119^[3]).

The OECD invited 70 Chinese philanthropic organisations to participate in the survey, and gathered information from a sample of 62 organisations. The sample targeted the largest organisations according to their annual spending in grant making or project financing, based on desk research. The targeted

population consisted of private foundations that spent more than USD 2 million per year, or the equivalent in local currency based on annual nominal exchange rates.

Six organisations provided the OECD with financial data directly. For the remaining 56, the OECD Centre on Philanthropy compiled data from each organisation's publicly available information as of 31 December 2021, or from China's Non-Profit Organisations (NPO) Portal.² The consolidated data include donations and project financing that surpassed CNY 1 million (Yuan renminbi). For the purpose of this data collection, information was considered from different types of NPOs, such as civil non-enterprise institutions, social service organisations and private foundations (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1. OECD survey uptake in China

Survey	Invited to participate	Excluded (outside of sampling frame)	Included (within sampling frame)	Secondary data	Response rate (percentage)
Organisational	70	0	6	0	9%
Financial	70	0	6	56	89%
Total effective sample				62	

Thematic classifications

For all data collected from the financial survey and secondary sources, thematic classifications followed the OECD DAC Purpose Codes on sector classifications.³ The thematic classifications (sector, purpose, cross-cutting themes, etc.) used a text-based machine learning algorithm. This was created using *Xtreme Gradient Boosting* (XGBoost) (Chen and Guestrin, 2016^[5]) and text from grant/project descriptions. XGBoost, which is used extensively for classification tasks. It was implemented using the **R** interface.⁴

2. Domestic and cross-border philanthropy in China

Philanthropy has expanded significantly over the past few years within the People's Republic of China (hereafter "China"). Private philanthropy from 62 large domestic donors in China and 45 large international foundations amounted to USD 3.1 billion over 2016-19 (OECD, 2021^[3]). Domestic foundations account for the largest share of funding (USD 2.7 billion), while cross-border philanthropic financing represents 15% of all funding.

Domestic philanthropy mainly targets education and research institutions, while cross-border philanthropy focuses on health and reproductive health, and more recently, on renewable energy.

Domestic philanthropic financing in China, as in other emerging markets, is heavily concentrated in a few geographical areas. From the funding that has a clear provincial allocation (29% of funding estimated), most is directed towards 3 provinces: Guangdong, Shanghai and Beijing.⁵ Finally, philanthropy's support towards gender equality is relatively low, compared to philanthropy for development at a global level, and mainly channelled towards reproductive health care.

The context of modern philanthropy in China

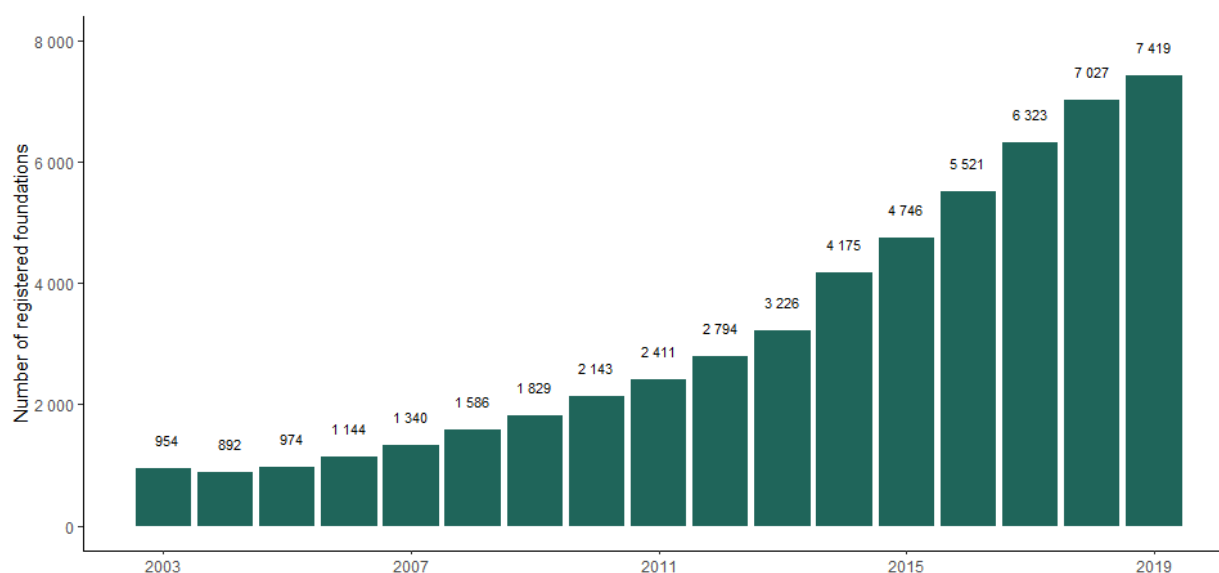
A variety of national laws and regulations provide a framework for philanthropic giving in China. The legal environment for Chinese philanthropy results from two recent national laws regulating the non-profit sector. First, the 2016 China Charity Law regulates domestic charitable organisations, activities, fundraising and information disclosure. Second, the 2017 Overseas Non-Government Organisation law regulates all activities in mainland China by non-profit, non-governmental, social organisations legally established overseas.

Besides the China Charity Law, domestic foundations must abide by a series of regulations and measures regarding activities, information disclosure, annual inspection and management. These regulations include provisions ranging from registration of foundations to their daily operation and annual reporting.

In general, Chinese philanthropic organisations are part of a broader category of Social Organisations. They can take three distinct legal forms: social associations (SA), social service organisations (SSOs) and foundations. As of 31 December 2019, 867 000 social organisations were registered in China, including 372 000 SAs, 487 000 SSOs and 7 419 foundations (Tao, 2019^[6]). Total social donations as of 2019 represented CNY 133 billion (approximately USD 19 billion), including donations of CNY 22.5 billion from 114 Chinese philanthropists (Cunningham and Li, 2020^[7]). In addition to large donations from philanthropists, other sources of domestic philanthropic resources include lotteries and Internet crowdfunding donations.

Within social organisations, the number of foundations has grown steadily at least since 2000. The distribution of foundations and flow of charitable project funding shows a distinct geographic pattern. Most foundations are headquartered in China's more developed eastern cities (Tao, 2019^[6]) (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1. Charitable foundations registered in China, 2003-19



Source: (Tao, 2019^[6]).

Box 2.1. Accountability and visibility: The role of the China Foundation Centre

The China Foundation Centre (CFC) was created by a group of 35 foundations in 2010 as an information-disclosure platform to improve Chinese foundations' transparency and accountability. Featured data, which as of 2022 cover over 8 000 foundations, help development stakeholders to better understand the Chinese philanthropic sector. The CFC makes data from multiple sources available in a single system, including repurposed information from Charity China, as well as report and websites of foundations.

Using this information, the CFC also developed the Foundation Transparency Index in 2012. The index aims to enhance foundations' capabilities on information disclosure and advocate for a more transparent philanthropic culture in China.

According to the China Foundation Centre, philanthropy has grown rapidly in China in the last 40 years, and even more recently since the 2016 Charity Law. However, working towards greater transparency remains key to increase the public's trust in the sector, as well as foundations' effectiveness. By regularly sharing their programme and financial information with stakeholders, philanthropic organisations gain more support from donors and get a better understanding of their beneficiaries' needs. Moreover, transparency pushes foundations to set higher standards for governance and programme implementation. This leads them to enhance their expertise in solving the issues they are invested in.

Source: China Foundation Centre.

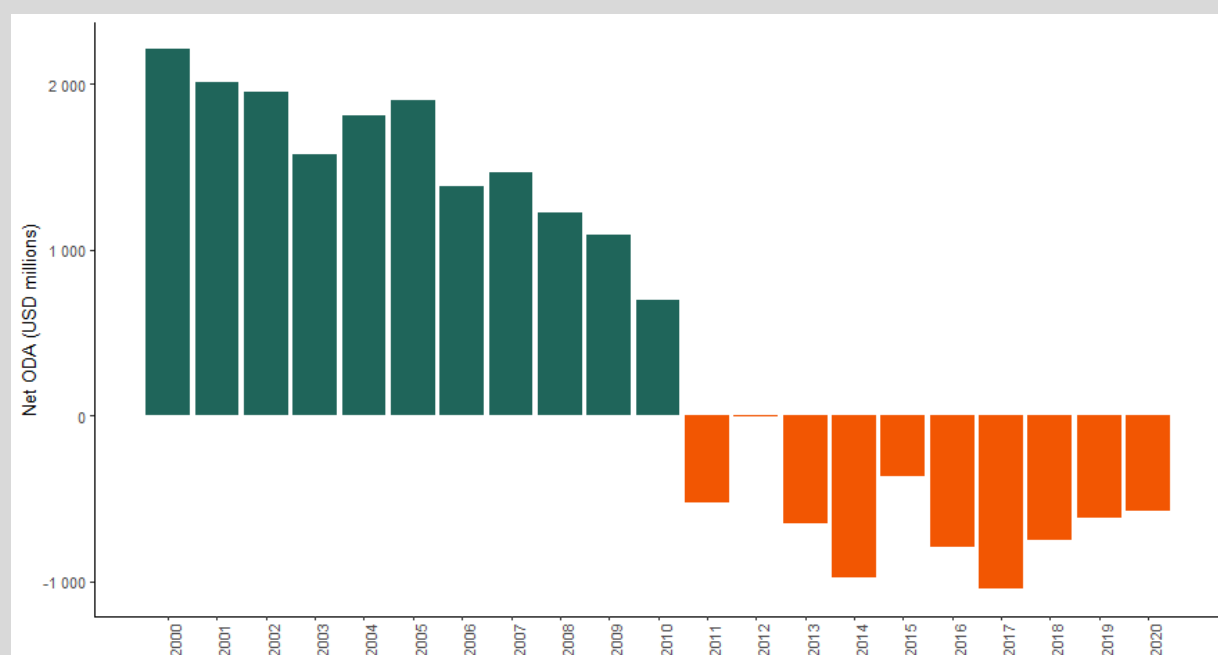
Domestic philanthropy is significantly larger than cross-border philanthropy to China

Between 2016-19, domestic philanthropy from large donors stood at USD 2.7 billion, while cross-border philanthropy to China reached USD 0.4 billion. Despite only including financing from 62 large domestic donors in China, domestic financing vastly surpasses cross-border philanthropy towards China in terms of amounts disbursed. Over the period, cross-border funding represented only 15% of all funding identified. While average cross-border philanthropy to China averaged USD 100 million per year, domestic philanthropy averaged approximately USD 675 million per year.

Box 2.2. From beneficiary to donor: China and official development assistance over the past 20 years

China's economic transformation over the past 20 years has moved the country from being a net recipient of development finance to a net contributor. In 2000, China received USD 2.2 billion per year of official development assistance (ODA). However, the country's net ODA inflow progressively decreased. In 2011, China registered a negative net ODA balance for the first time (Figure 2.2). In 2018, the country established the China International Development Co-operation Agency to oversee its development co-operation model. As of 2020, China's international development co-operation reached USD 4.8 billion. It directed a significant amount (USD 1.6 billion) through multilateral organisations (OECD, 2022^[8]).

Figure 2.2. Evolution of net ODA in China, 2000-20 (disbursements, constant 2020 USD)

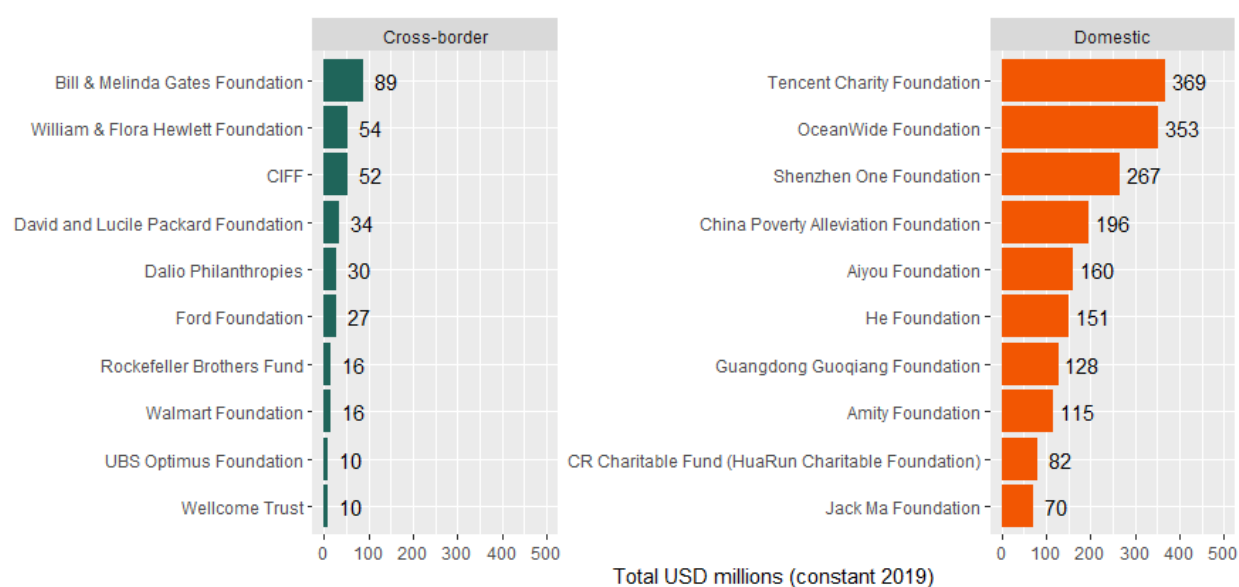


Source: (OECD, 2022^[8]).

Domestic and cross-border philanthropy are highly concentrated among a few organisations

Similar to philanthropy at a global level, most financing in China comes from only a few organisations. The largest cross-border foundation is the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) with an average of USD 22.5 million per year over 2016-19. Tencent Charity Foundation, the largest domestic donor sampled, provided on average USD 92 million per year. Moreover, the top five domestic donors contributed 50% of all domestic financing, while the top five cross-border donors provided 63% of all cross-border financing (Figure 2.3).

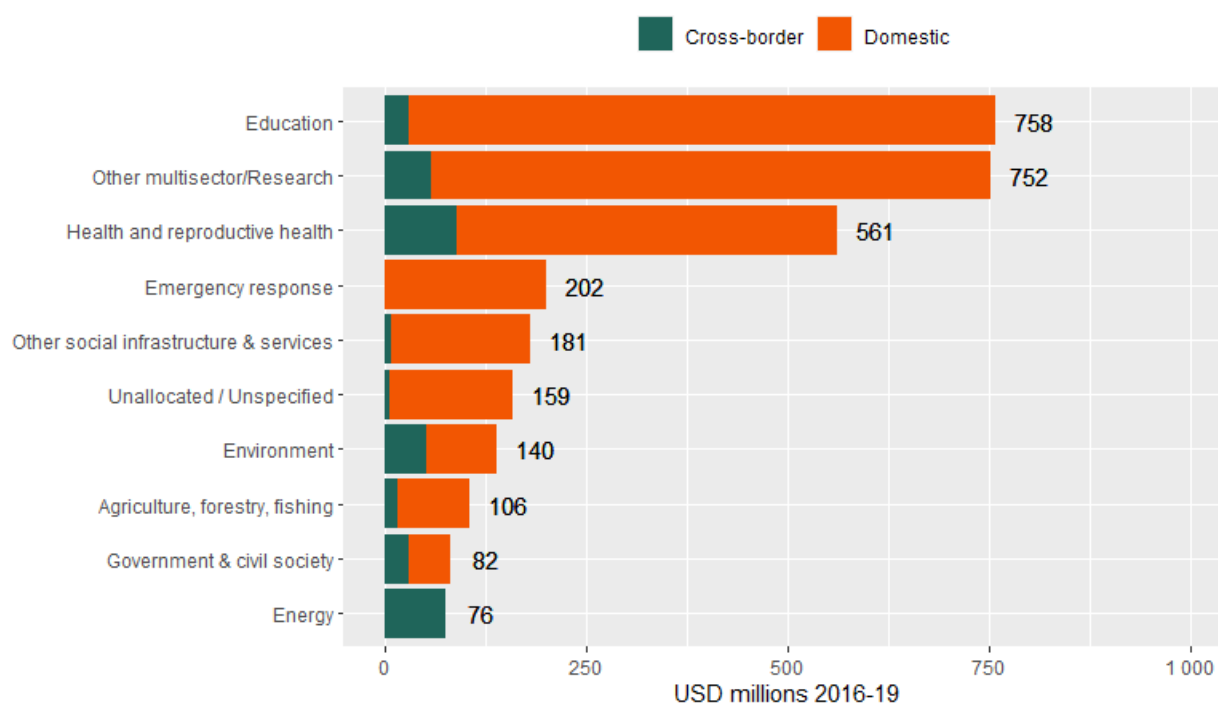
Figure 2.3. Largest cross-border and domestic donors in China, 2016-19



Source: (OECD, 2021^[31]), OECD Survey in China and (People's Republic of China Ministry of Civil Affairs Department of Charity Promotion and Social Work, 2021^[39]).

Domestic philanthropy focuses on education and research, while cross-border philanthropy is concentrated in health, reproductive health and renewable energy

Sector allocations show that most financing went to education and research institutions, followed by health and reproductive health. Over 2016-19, education received USD 758 million, mostly from domestic organisations. Meanwhile, research and other multisector support received USD 752 million, and health and reproductive health USD 561 million. Cross-border philanthropy is mostly focused on health and reproductive health, and more recently on renewable energy (Figure 2.4).

Figure 2.4. Philanthropy for development in China by sector, 2016-19

Note: "Other multisector" includes research institutions and universities.

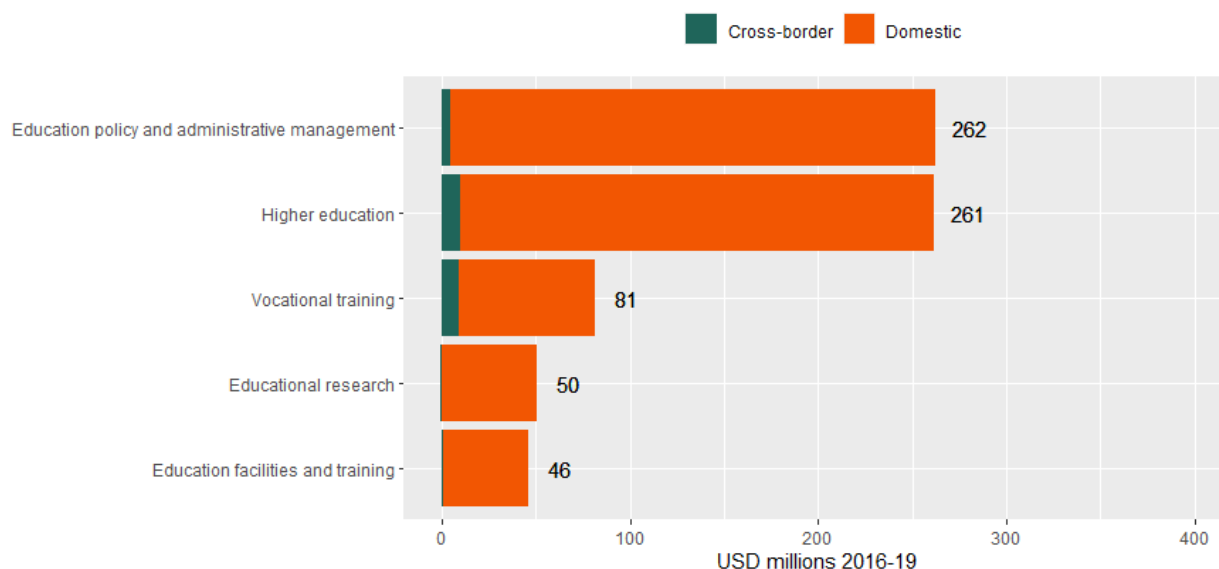
Source: (OECD, 2021^[3]), OECD Survey in China and (People's Republic of China Ministry of Civil Affairs Department of Charity Promotion and Social Work, 2021^[9]).

Education funding targets general education services and higher education

Like philanthropy at a global level, education-related giving in China is focused on expanding access to education, and in particular, financing access to higher education. General-purpose education funding, which is classified as education policy and administrative management, represented the largest proportion of domestic funding to education with USD 262 million. Projects in this category include, for example, direct support to school infrastructure for basic and secondary education.

Financing towards higher education amounted to USD 261 million, while vocational training represented USD 81 million. Financing towards educational research amounted to USD 50 million, and education facilities and training received USD 46 million (Figure 2.5).

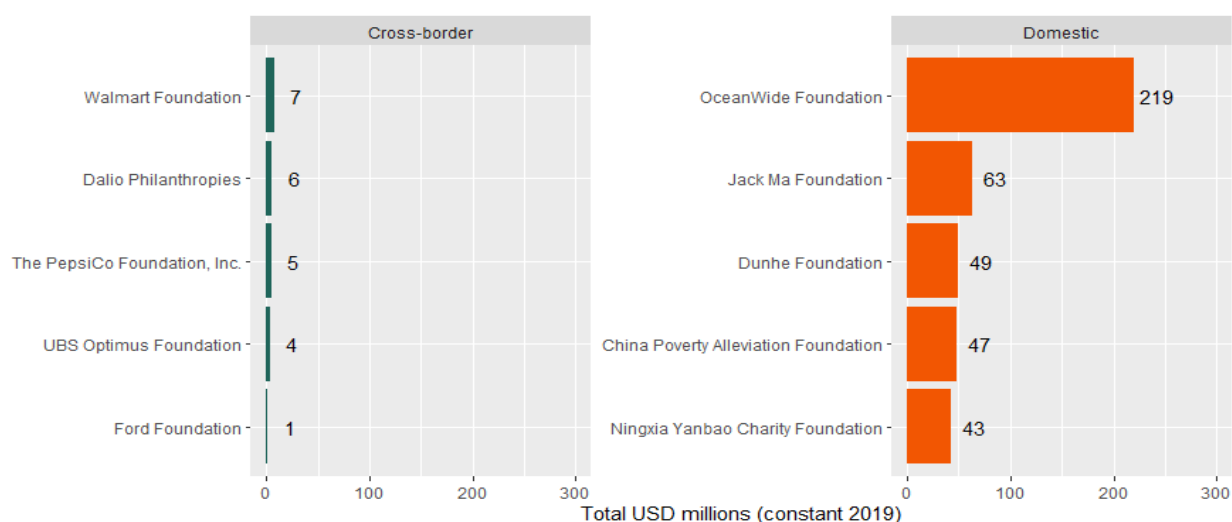
Figure 2.5. Philanthropy for education in China, 2016-19



Source: (OECD, 2021^[31]), OECD Survey in China and (People's Republic of China Ministry of Civil Affairs Department of Charity Promotion and Social Work, 2021^[9]).

A few domestic organisations provide most of the education financing in China. The largest domestic donor is OceanWide Foundation with USD 219 million. This is followed by JackMa Foundation (USD 63 million) and Dunhe Foundation (USD 49 million). Considering international financing, the largest cross-border donor in education – Walmart Foundation – provided only USD 7 million over 2016-19 (Figure 2.6).

Figure 2.6. Top philanthropic organisations in education in China, 2016-19

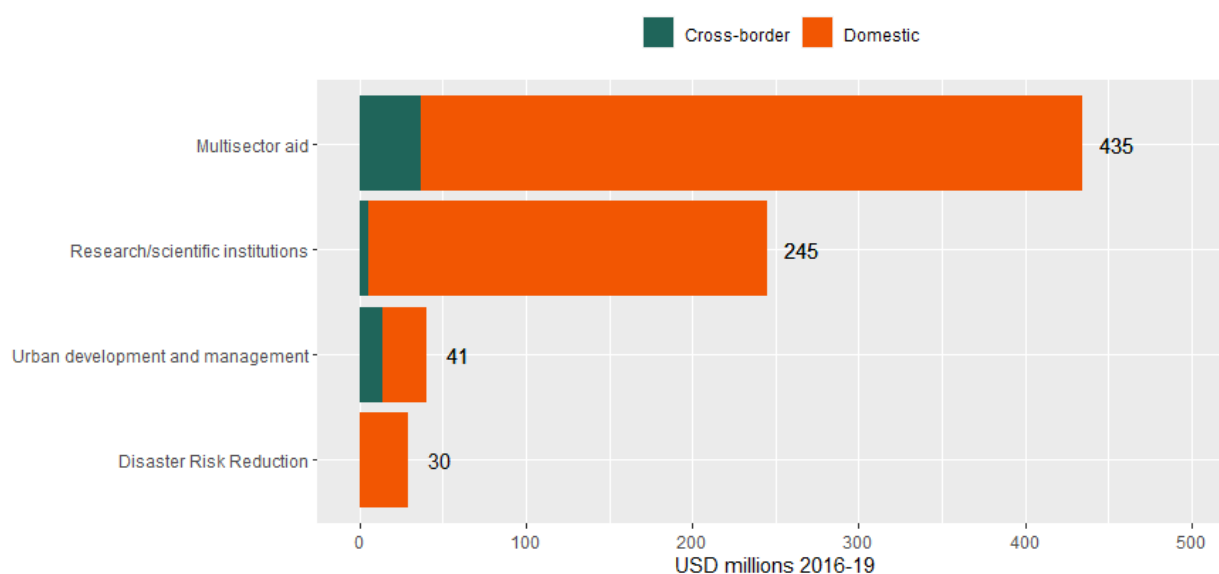


Source: (OECD, 2021^[31]), OECD Survey in China and (People's Republic of China Ministry of Civil Affairs Department of Charity Promotion and Social Work, 2021^[9]).

Research emerges as one of the largest priorities in domestic philanthropy

Financial support to research organisations and universities is a long-standing priority of global philanthropy. During 2016-19, private philanthropy towards universities was estimated at USD 2.5 billion from 205 large foundations worldwide (OECD, 2021^[3]). Domestic philanthropy in China provides significant support to develop research capacities within the country, with over USD 245 million allocated to various universities and research centres (Figure 2.7).

Figure 2.7. Philanthropy for research, multisector support, urban development, and Disaster Risk Reduction in China, 2016-19



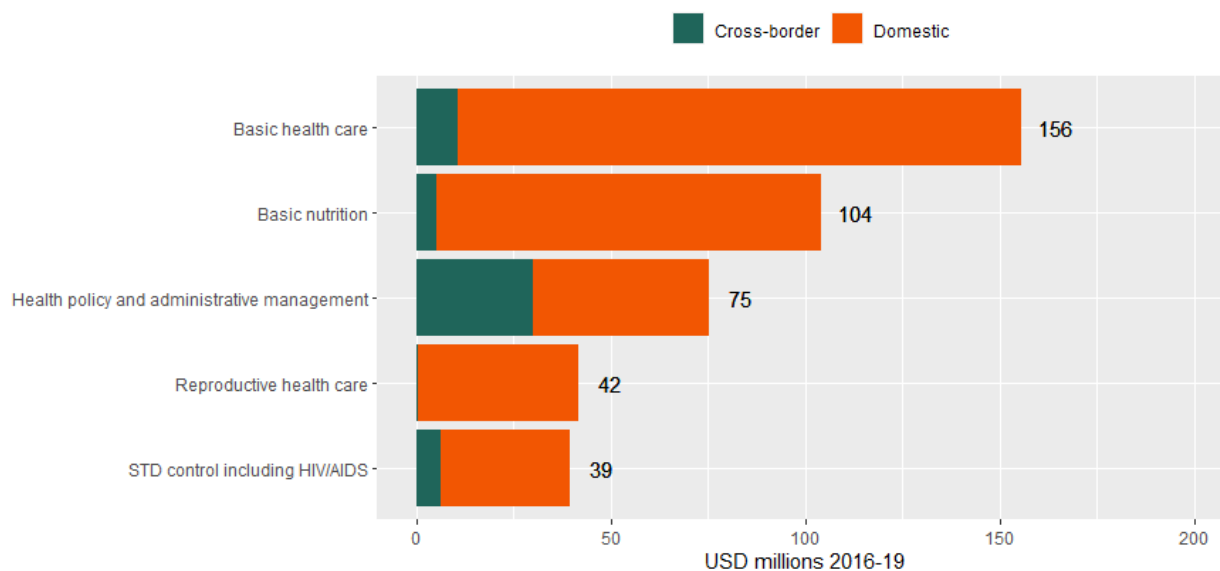
Note: "Multisector aid" includes financing of interventions in many several sectors at a time.

Source: (OECD, 2021^[3]), OECD Survey in China and (People's Republic of China Ministry of Civil Affairs Department of Charity Promotion and Social Work, 2021^[9]).

Domestic funding towards health focuses on basic health care and nutrition, while international philanthropy mostly supports health policy

In health and reproductive health, domestic philanthropy provided USD 471 million, focusing especially on supporting access to basic health care and nutrition. Meanwhile, cross-border foundations provided USD 90 million targeted predominately towards funding control of tuberculosis and improvements in health policy. In addition, cross-border philanthropy allocated USD 30 million towards capacity building of the health sector⁶ (Figure 2.8).

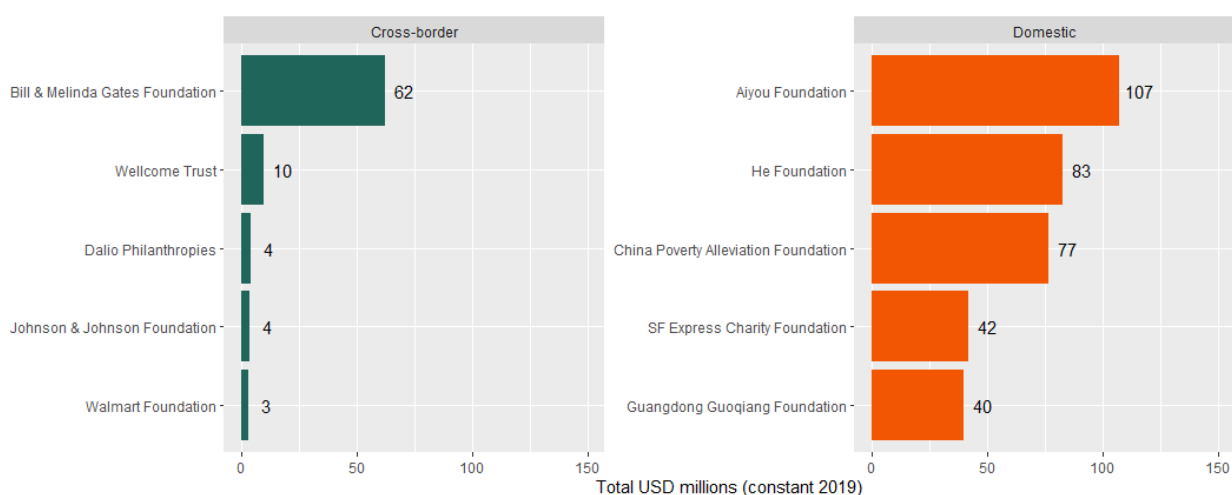
Figure 2.8. Philanthropy for health and reproductive health in China, 2016-19



Source: (OECD, 2021^[3]), OECD Survey in China and (People's Republic of China Ministry of Civil Affairs Department of Charity Promotion and Social Work, 2021^[9]).

The largest funders in the health and reproductive health sector on the domestic side were Aiyou Foundation with USD 107 million, the He Foundation with USD 83 million, and the China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation with USD 77 million. On the international side, the largest funders were BMGF with USD 62 million and the Wellcome Trust with USD 10 million (Figure 2.9).

Figure 2.9. Top donors in health and reproductive in China, 2016-19



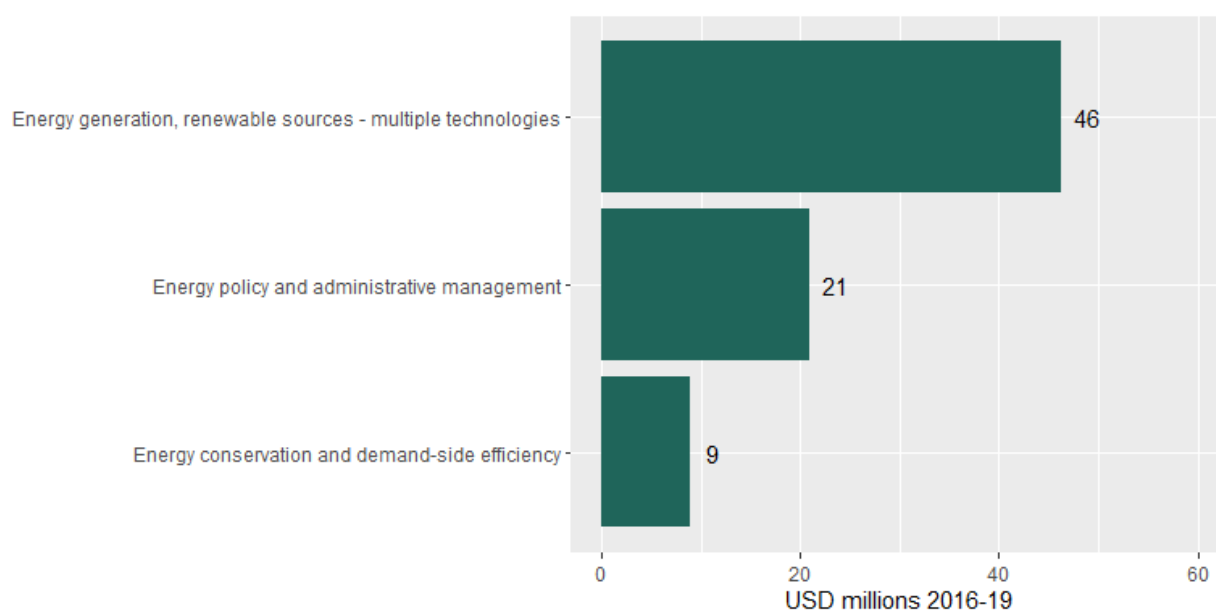
Source: (OECD, 2021^[3]), OECD Survey in China and (People's Republic of China Ministry of Civil Affairs Department of Charity Promotion and Social Work, 2021^[9]).

Cross-border philanthropy is investing in clean energy in China

One noteworthy difference between international and domestic philanthropy is related to investments in renewable energy. Over 2016-19, international foundations allocated USD 76 million towards renewable energy and energy conservation (Figure 2.10).

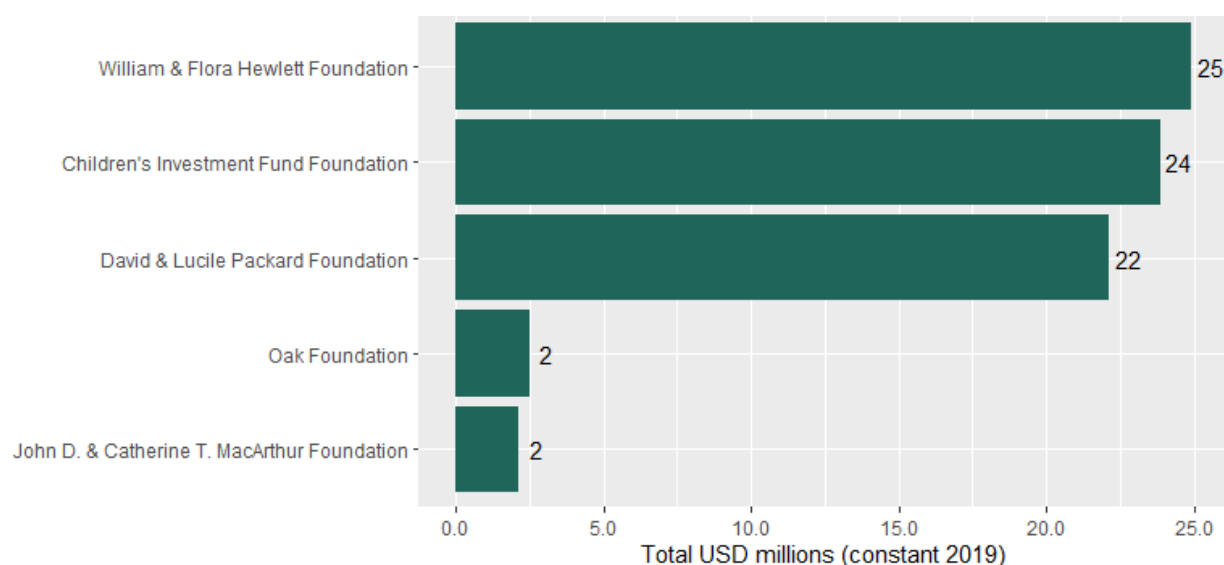
Three foundations have provided most of the funding in this space: the William & Flora Hewlett Foundation with USD 25 million; the Children's Investment Fund Foundation with USD 24 million; and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation with USD 22 million (Figure 2.11).

Figure 2.10. International philanthropy for renewable energy in China, 2016-19



Source: (OECD, 2022^[8]).

Figure 2.11. Top international funders in renewable energy in China, 2016-19

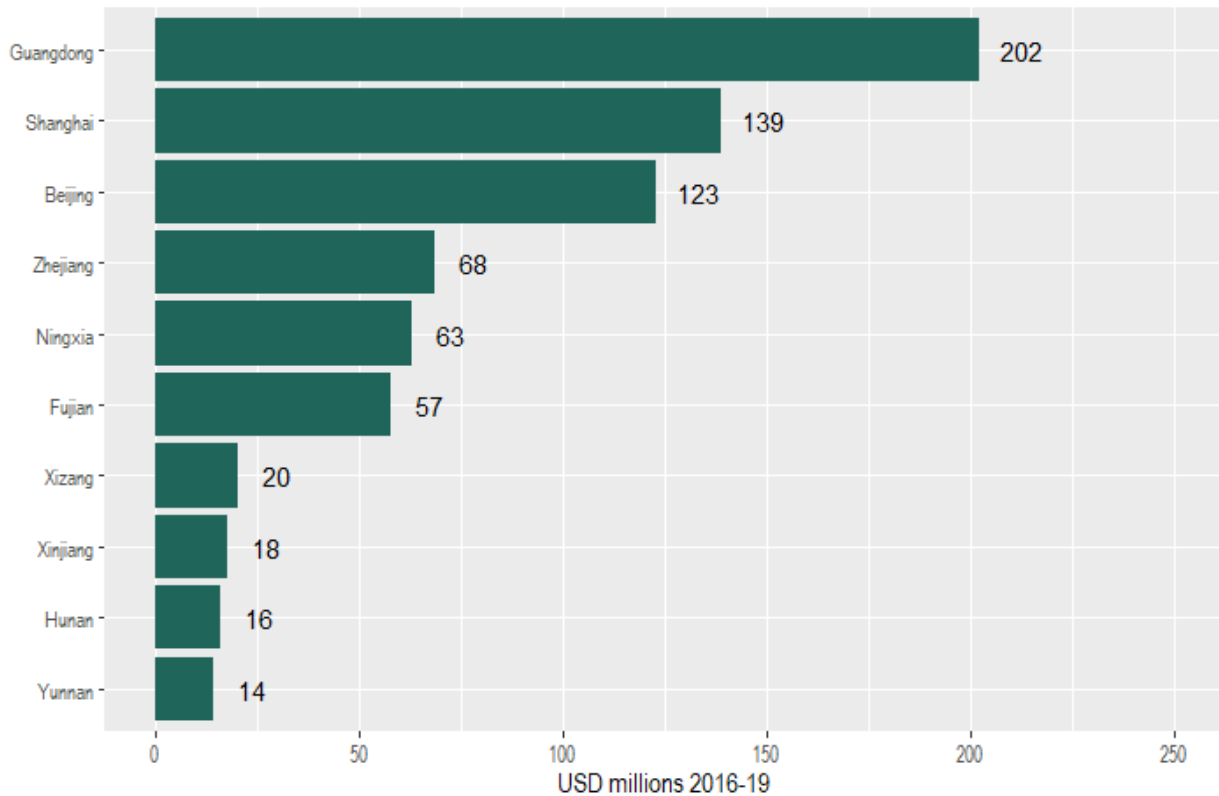


Source: (OECD, 2022^[8]).

Like other emerging markets, domestic philanthropy is heavily concentrated in a few provinces, namely Guangdong, Shanghai and Beijing

In all emerging markets analysed by the OECD, philanthropic financing from large organisations tends to benefit a few geographies often those with high economic activity (OECD, 2021^[3]). China also presents a large concentration of domestic philanthropic resources in a few provinces, particularly those with higher economic activity (Figure 2.12).

Most financing from large domestic funders is not identified by provinces within China, as USD 2 billion (71%) has a national or non-disclosed geographical scope. However, approximately USD 793 million is available at a provincial level (29%). From these resources allocable by province, it is estimated that Guangdong received USD 202 million (25%), Shanghai received USD 139 million (18%), and Beijing USD 123 million (16%). The other provinces together accrued the remaining USD 329 million.

Figure 2.12. Provinces that receive most domestic philanthropy in China, 2016-19

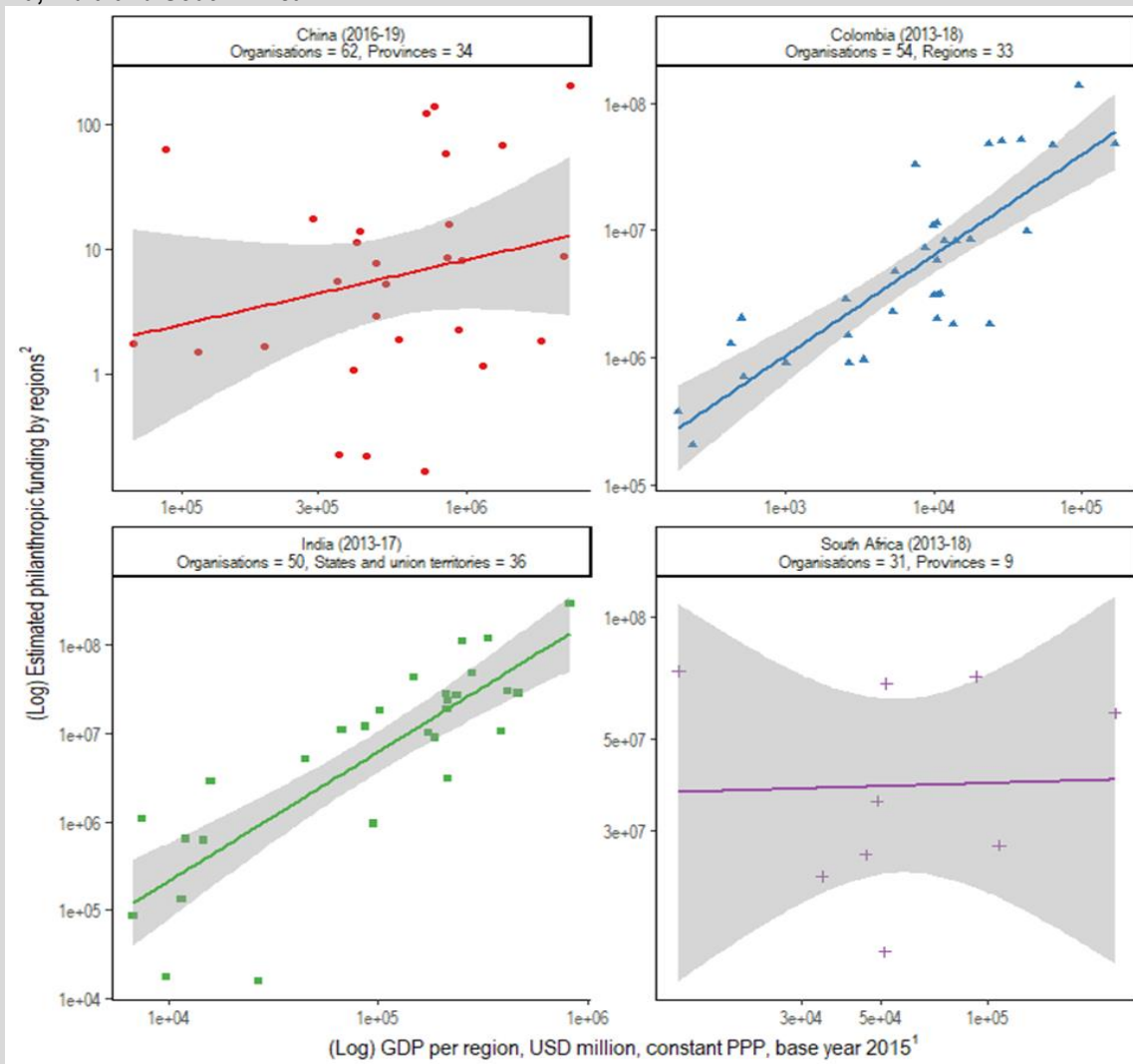
Source: OECD Survey in China and (People's Republic of China Ministry of Civil Affairs Department of Charity Promotion and Social Work, 2021^[9]).

Box 2.3. Philanthropy within emerging markets: The case of Colombia, China, India and South Africa

For many countries that have recently experienced long periods of sustained economic growth, large-scale philanthropy has emerged in parallel. In some of these countries, domestic philanthropy has risen beyond international philanthropy in just a few years and is becoming a significant source of development financing. Financing from the largest domestic philanthropic organisations has already surpassed international philanthropy in most countries analysed by the OECD Centre on Philanthropy, including Colombia, China and India.

Two patterns emerge on domestic philanthropy for development. First, education receives the most funding in each country and has the largest number of donors. In some countries like Colombia, higher education is the most supported area within education. In others, like India and China, basic education and early childhood education receive most of the philanthropic support. Second, domestic financing is not distributed uniformly within each country except in South Africa. In China, Colombia and India, most regions receive little to no philanthropic funding; most resources are concentrated in a handful of regions, particularly those with the highest levels of regional gross domestic product (OECD, 2020^[10]). In India, the states of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh received 60% of all financing between 2013 and 2017. Meanwhile, in Colombia, 55% of all funding over 2013-18 flowed to the regions of Antioquia, Cundinamarca, Bogotá and Atlántico (Figure 2.13).

Figure 2.13. How is domestic philanthropy distributed within emerging economies? The case of Colombia, China, India and South Africa



Note 1: Latest available data: South Africa and India (2013); China and Colombia (2018).

Note 2: Funding estimated for organisations sampled within each country only.

Source: (OECD, 2021_[3]), (OECD, 2021_[11]), (OECD, 2021_[12]), (OECD, 2019_[13]).

3. Philanthropy and gender equality in China

Context of gender equality in China

In recent decades, the People's Republic of China (hereafter “China”) has intensified efforts to formulate and enforce laws and policies protecting women's rights in different spheres of life. The Law on the Protection of Rights and Interests of Women states that “it is a basic national policy to realise equality between men and women” and safeguards women's rights in various areas, including politics, education, employment, property, marriage and family (CEDAW, 2020^[14]). In addition, the government recently enacted laws protecting women's right to participate in politics and social affairs (Xiajuan and Lijun, 2017^[15]), and strengthening regulations against domestic violence, harassment and women's trafficking (CEDAW, 2020^[14]).

Despite significant improvements in the legal framework to protect women's rights and interests, gender-based discrimination persists and social norms continue to undermine the status of girls and women in society. Women continue to face barriers to participating in politics and climb high-ranking positions in the private and public sector (OECD, 2020^[16]). In 2020, only one-fourth of national parliamentarians were female (IPU, 2022^[17]), and only 3.2% held ministerial-level positions (World Bank, 2021^[18]). In 2021, women were also underrepresented in the labour market, with eight female workers for every ten working males (World Bank, 2021^[18]). In addition, almost one-fifth of working women held part-time jobs, compared to 12% of working men (OECD/ILO, 2019^[19]). The root causes for these gender disparities lie in social norms that justify differential treatment of men and women (OECD, 2020^[16]). For instance, half of the population believes that men “make better political leaders”, while more than one-third declares that men make better business executives than female counterparts (Haerpfer et al., 2022^[20]).

The OECD Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI)⁷ aims to better understand how social institutions discriminate through formal and informal laws, social norms and practices. To that end, it sheds light on four critical areas of gender-based discrimination: discrimination in the family, restricted physical integrity, restricted access to productive and financial resources and restricted civil liberties. The following sections will dive deeper into each of these dimensions to provide an overview of relevant elements of gender-based discrimination in China.

Discriminatory practices within the family persist, particularly in unpaid care work

Discriminatory social institutions undermine women's status in society and perpetuate an unequal distribution of unpaid work in the household. Despite laws prohibiting harmful practices, early marriage, human trafficking, and high bride prices persist. In addition, traditional gender norms expect women to carry the bulk of household responsibilities, putting them under pressure to combine unpaid and paid work.

China's legal framework protects women from early and forced marriage. However, male overpopulation and the resulting difficulty for men to find a marriage partner are encouraging child marriage and bride trafficking. China's Law on the Protection of Minors (Article 15) prohibits child marriage and the Civil Code (Article 1047) sets the legal age of marriage at 22 for men and 20 for women. In addition, the Law on the Protection of Rights and Interests of Women (Article 44) "protects women's right of self-determination in marriage" and the Criminal Law (Article 257) penalises "those using force to interfere in others' freedom of marriage" with up to two years of imprisonment or detention. Despite these provisions, the prevalence of child marriage in China increased between 2000 and 2015, presumably caused by the lack of women of marriageable age due to high male-to-female sex ratio at birth since the 1980s (Luo et al., 2020^[21]). Pressure to find a marriage partner has pushed men to turn to younger women or pay for a trafficked bride from poorer areas in China or neighbouring countries (Xia, Zhou and Cai, 2020^[22]).

Within the household, women spend, on average, 260% more time than their male counterparts on unpaid work, and often face the double burden of paid work and unpaid domestic labour (OECD, 2019^[23]). Although women have gained influence in public affairs, time use patterns in the household still follow traditional gender roles, especially in rural areas (Yang, 2017^[24]; de Bruin and Liu, 2020^[25]).

Long-term effects of child sex preference and beliefs about domestic violence remain a challenge

Discriminatory social norms jeopardise the physical integrity of girls and women. Parental preference for male children combined with population policies that limit family size threaten the survival of the girl child. Meanwhile, widespread beliefs justifying violence against women reinforce this threat.

China exhibits a shortfall in female population caused by parental preference for sons, encouraging sex-selective abortion and high female infant mortality (Lai, 2005^[26]). Until 2015, the implementation of the one-child policy restricted women's agency on family planning and often resulted in coerced abortions. Today, Chinese law does not place obstacles to abortion under the consent of the pregnant woman (OECD, 2019^[23]). Yet, in a recent study, 20% of women reported difficulty in accessing their preferred method of contraception, while 11% experienced obstacles in accessing abortion and/or post-abortion facilities (Women Deliver and Focus 2030, 2021^[27]).

Labour market participation and control over assets hinder women's economic empowerment

Women lag behind men in access to productive and financial resources. Discriminatory social institutions undermine women's participation and status in the labour market; they infringe on women's ability to reach leadership positions or start their own business; and they create gender disparities in access to farm and residential land.

China's labour force participation has been declining in recent decades and discriminatory social norms push women into lower status and lower paying jobs compared to their male counterparts. Economic reforms gradually transformed China's central economic planning into a market-based system. Subsequently, women's labour force participation steadily declined from 73% in 1990 to 62% in 2021 (World Bank, 2021^[18]). With increasing marketisation, companies gained autonomy in recruitment and hiring procedures. This opened the door to gender discrimination and revived traditional gender roles whereby women subordinate their professional ambitions to family obligations (He and Wu, 2017^[28]). Women ended up taking irregular work in positions with lower pay and benefits to reconcile work and family

life, increasing the gender segregation in occupations and the gender pay gap (He and Wu, 2017^[28]; Ma and Zhang, 2019^[29]; de Bruin and Liu, 2020^[25]).

Women continue to lag in positions of power in the private and the public sector alike

China grants men and women equal rights to acquire nationality, hold public or political office and sue in courts. However, gender-based discrimination still undermines women's status and opportunities to gain influence in the public sphere. China's legislation grants men and women the same rights to acquire, change and confer their nationality to their children (OECD, 2019^[23]). They also enjoy equal rights to apply for identity cards, passports and other travel documents for themselves and their children, independent of marital status (OECD, 2019^[23]). Both parents have the right to register the birth of their child. However, giving birth requires a permit in China. This certificate authorises the birth of a child and grants access to prenatal care and the permission to register the child after birth (OECD, 2019^[23]).

China has made significant strides to improve women's access to justice. Women and men have the same right to sue and their testimonies have equal evidentiary weight in courts (OECD, 2019^[23]). In recent years, the Supreme People's Court transformed family trials to carefully distinguish different marital and family disputes and improve the protection of women's legitimate rights and interests (CEDAW, 2020^[14]). Some courts created tribunals for civil cases that concern women's rights and interests and invite jurors from women's rights organisations to participate in these hearings (People's Republic of China Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2022^[30]). In addition, China established a co-ordination group of members from 19 government departments to align efforts to protect women's rights and interests (People's Republic of China Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2022^[30]).

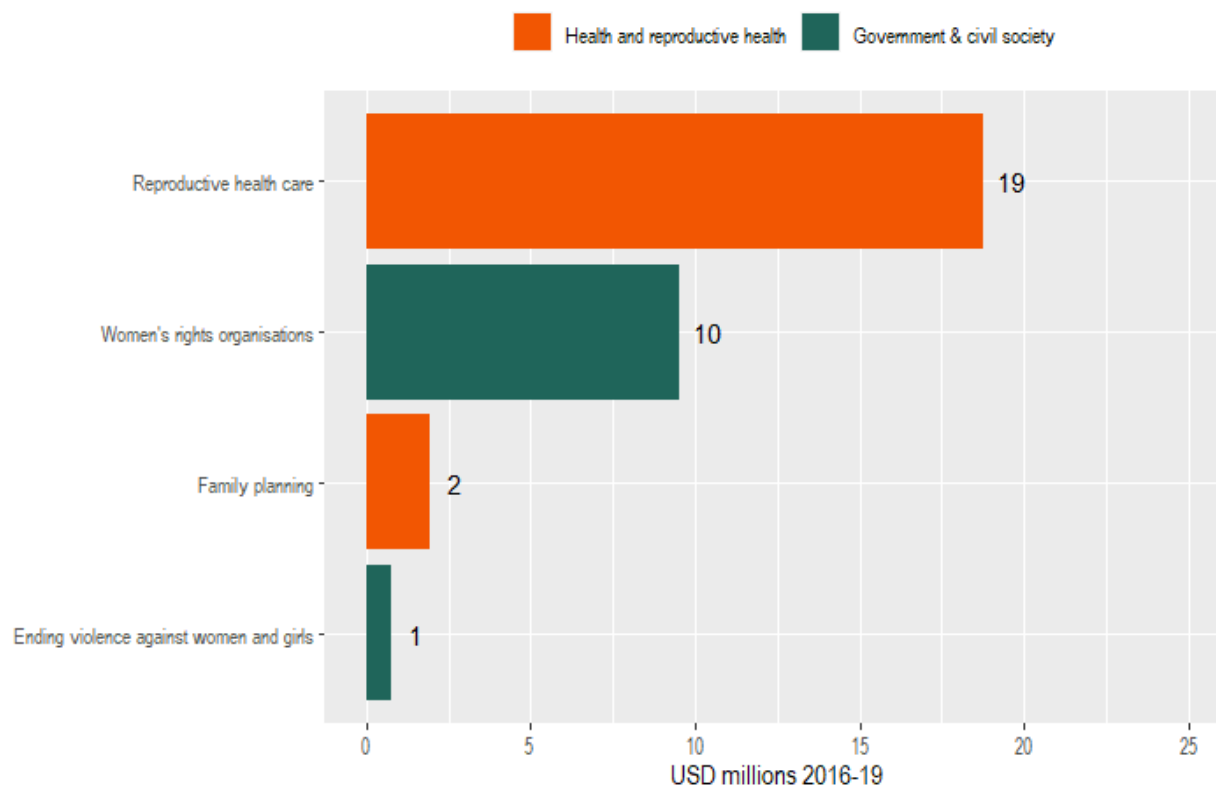
Philanthropy towards gender equality in China is relatively low when compared to international levels

Philanthropic organisations worldwide are tackling gender inequalities through their philanthropic funding via multiple channels, including: i) reproductive health and family planning; and ii) supporting organisations that advocate for women's rights and for an end to violence against women and girls. Between 2016 and 2019, funding towards these areas amounted to 8% of all large-scale philanthropic financing at USD 3.3 billion (OECD, 2021^[3]).

In China, funding towards these four areas over 2016-19 amounted to USD 31 million, less than 1% of all funding from large philanthropic organisations (Figure 3.1). This level stands close to that identified in other large emerging economies such as India between 2013-17 (OECD, 2019^[23]) but remains below the overall level of global giving. The funding is mostly provided by domestic foundations, with USD 21 million, while cross-border foundations provided the remaining USD 10 million.

This can be explained by the role of government-supported initiatives like the China Women's Development Fund, which has a larger and more visible role to play in advancing gender equality in the country, and therefore leaves little room to philanthropic organisations to contribute.

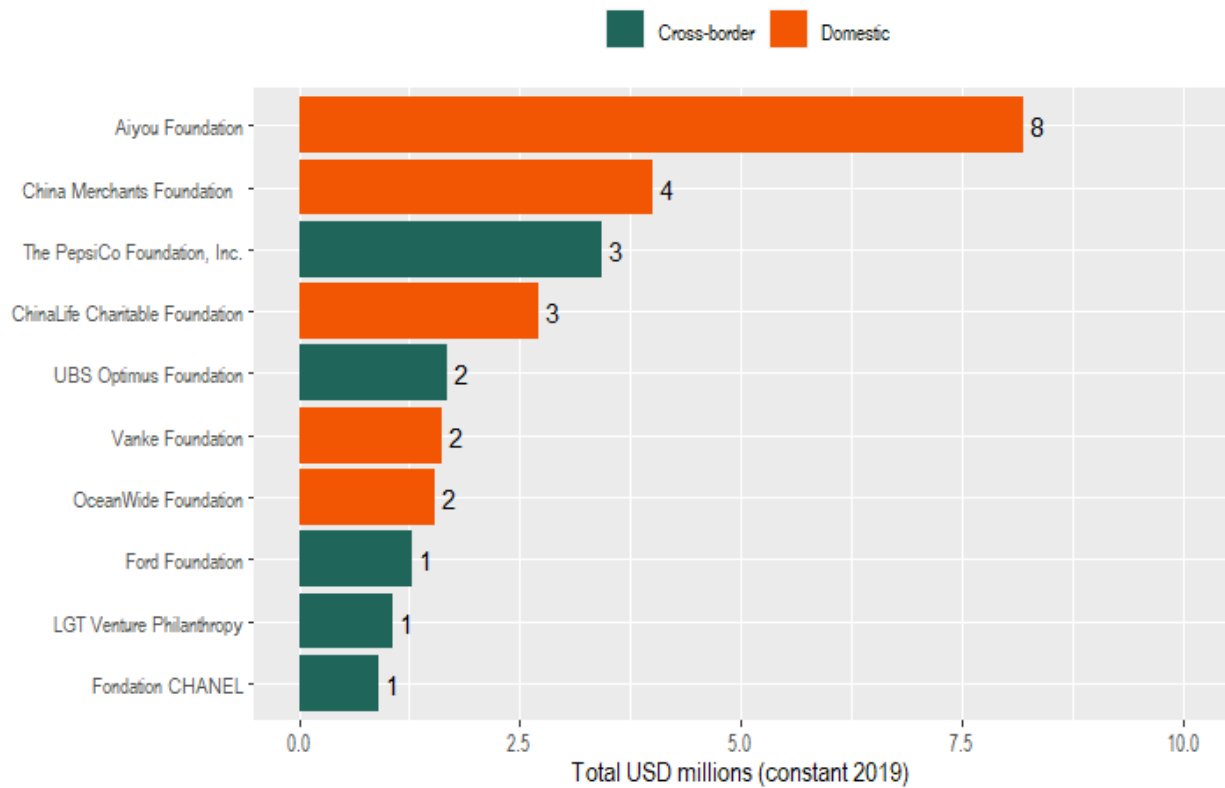
Figure 3.1. Funding in areas relevant to the reduction of gender inequalities, 2016-19



Source: (OECD, 2021^[3]), OECD Survey in China and (People's Republic of China Ministry of Civil Affairs Department of Charity Promotion and Social Work, 2021^[9]).

The largest domestic funders in the areas related to the promotion of gender equality were Aiyou Foundation and China Merchants Foundation. Meanwhile, the largest cross-border donors included the PepsiCo Foundation and UBS Optimus Foundation (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2. Largest funders in areas relevant to the reduction of gender inequalities, 2016-19



Source: (OECD, 2021^[3]), OECD Survey in China and (People's Republic of China Ministry of Civil Affairs Department of Charity Promotion and Social Work, 2021^[9]).

Key lessons and way forward

Philanthropy in the People's Republic of China (hereafter "China") has evolved in tandem with the whole economy in recent years, giving way to an expansive and diverse sector. Large-scale philanthropic foundations are emerging, with the capacity to allocate USD 2.7 billion over 2016-19. Moreover, domestic philanthropy has vastly surpassed cross-border philanthropy towards China. Cross-border philanthropy from large organisations stood at USD 0.4 billion, representing around 15% of estimated philanthropy.

As is often the case with philanthropy globally and within emerging markets, a few organisations provide most of the philanthropic financing. Internationally, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is the largest donor to China, with USD 89 million over 2016-19. It is followed by the William & Flora Hewlett Foundation with USD 54 million and the Children's Investment Fund Foundation with USD 52 million. Meanwhile, the largest domestic foundations sampled include Tencent Charity Foundation, which allocated over USD 369 million, OceanWide Foundation with USD 353 million and OneFoundation with USD 267 million.

Domestic funding is mostly focused on education and financing research and universities, while international philanthropy remains focused on health and reproductive health. Funding towards higher education is a clear priority in domestic philanthropy, with over USD 261 million allocated to this end. However, vocational training also received substantial funding from domestic foundations. On the international side, renewable energy has emerged as a focus in recent years.

Within China, the provinces do not identify where most of the funding is allocated. Only USD 793 million (29% of domestic funding) can be identified from the sample as being allocated to specific provinces. Based on these data, most resources are concentrated in three provinces: Guangdong received USD 202 million (25%), Shanghai received USD 139 million (18%), and Beijing USD 123 million (16%). The other provinces together accrued the remaining USD 329 million.

In a similar vein to other emerging markets, gender-related giving amounted to less than 1% of estimated private philanthropy for development in China. This was below the international levels of 8% estimated for all large-scale philanthropy for development between 2016-19 (OECD, 2021^[3]).

Recommendations

For cross-border foundations

Build partnership networks with Chinese donors. International foundations working in China stand to gain in both knowledge and potential partnerships with domestic funders by building bridges with foundations already working in the same areas. Transparency is paramount to this end, as it enables both international and domestic donors to see overlapping and complementary objectives and to develop partnerships when relevant. Domestic and cross-border donors can better co-ordinate in the health and reproductive health sector – an area that both types of funders are heavily invested in.

Diversify the sectoral allocation of their resources relative to domestic philanthropists.

Based on the philanthropic flows identified in this report, the agendas of domestic and international donors overlap in terms of the allocation of resources in a limited number of sectors. For example, only international donors invest in the energy sector, while the domestic philanthropists' priority is education. Diversifying efforts is crucial to avoid duplicating work and to maximise impact across a wide range of areas.

For domestic foundations**Improve efforts to disclose the geographical allocation of domestic philanthropic funding.**

Despite the legal requirement for foundations to report the geographical allocation of their funding, large funders do not provide detailed information. This study could not identify the geographical allocation of 71% of domestic financing, which was classified as national or with non-disclosed geographical scope. With more detailed geographical information available, the Chinese philanthropic sector could improve its effectiveness since philanthropic organisations could understand how to better allocate their sources where they have the highest likely impact. Researchers too could benefit from more detailed geographical information.

Expand financing for the promotion of gender equality through channels that are not being funded, such as ending violence against women and girls. The study highlights that only USD 31 million, or less than 1% of all funding from large donors, funded gender equality in China over 2016-19. These resources were lower than average international levels, and also mostly channelled through reproductive health care and women's rights organisations. Philanthropic organisations could therefore align with other initiatives such as China Women Development Foundation and consider expanding their efforts in the promotion of gender equality in China, which remains an underfunded channel.

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Notes

¹ See (China Foundation Centre, 2021^[34]).

² See (People's Republic of China Ministry of Civil Affairs Department of Charity Promotion and Social Work, 2021^[9]).

³ See www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/purposecodessectorclassification.htm.

⁴ The pre-processing step followed a standard Natural Language Processing pipeline. Hyper-Parameter optimisation was done using a random search approach (Bergstra and Bengio, 2012^[32]). To validate results, a k-fold cross validation (Fushiki, 2011^[31]) approach was used. The metric performance relied on F1-score (Sokolova, Japkowicz and Szpakowicz, 2006^[33]).

⁵ Organisations with programmes that work across multiple provinces, or all provinces, tend to register their activities as having a “*national*” scope and, therefore, do not specify their activities at a provincial level.

⁶ Notable interventions include financing from BMGF towards Vital Strategies, and the support from the Wellcome Trust to large longitudinal populations studies.

⁷ The Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) ranks countries according to their level of discrimination. However, China is not ranked in the SIGI 2019 due to a lack of available data at the cut-off date of June 2017.

Annex: Sample of domestic foundations in China

List of Chinese philanthropic organisations included in this report, in decreasing order of financing identified.

Name of organisation	Total USD 2016-19
Tencent Charity Foundation	368.6
OceanWide Foundation	353.5
Shenzhen One Foundation	266.8
China Poverty Alleviation Foundation	196.4
Aiyu Foundation	160.3
He Foundation	151.4
Guangdong Guoqiang Foundation	128.0
Amity Foundation	115.3
CR Charitable Fund (HuaRun Charitable Foundation)	81.8
Jack Ma Foundation	70.0
Dunhe Foundation	64.7
SEE Foundation / SEE (Society of Entrepreneurs and Ecology)	63.2
Alibaba Foundation	54.1
Lingshan Charity Foundation	53.5
Heren Charitable Foundation	46.9
ADream Charitable Foundation Limited	45.0
Ningxia Yanbao Charity Foundation	44.2
Laoniu Foundation	40.7
Fosun Foundation	39.2
Vanke Foundation	38.7
SF Express Charity Foundation	34.0
China Merchants Foundation	32.1
China COSCO Shipping Charity Foundation	29.7
Shanghai United Foundation	27.4
Chow Tai Fook Charity Foundation	21.1
New Sunshine Charity Foundation	20.6
Shanghai Rende Charity Foundation	18.3
Zijin Mining Charitable Foundation	17.1

Name of organisation	Total USD 2016-19
Minsheng Foundation	14.0
ChinaLife Charitable Foundation	13.3
Huamin Charity Foundation	12.2
Beijing Lianyi Charity Foundation	11.5
Narada Foundation	11.4
Arawana Foundation	9.7
Beijing Sany Foundation	8.5
Heng Tong Foundation	7.1
Hanhong Love Charity Foundation	7.0
Amway Charity Foundation	6.6
Beijing Guixin Charitable Foundation	6.2
Fujian Zhengro Foundation	5.9
Harmony Community Foundation (Qianhe)	5.6
HengShen Foundation	5.3
Hunan HongHui Education Foundation	4.9
Ginko Foundation	4.9
HuangYiCong Foundation	4.2
Hongru Financial Education Foundation	3.7
Mana Data Foundation	2.1
Beijing Laoniui Brother & Sister Philanthropy Foundation	2.0
Leping Social Entrepreneur Foundation	1.9
Zijiang Foundation	1.9
AnnaChenNault Foundation	1.7
Beijing Dongfangjun Charitable Foundation	1.6
C Foundation	1.6
Yao Foundation	1.4
Beijing Xianfeng (K2 Foundation)	1.3
BaoShang Bank Foundation	0.9
Yifang Foundation	0.9
Jiankun Foundation	0.8
Beijing Kaifeng Foundaiton	0.6
Shanghai K Charitable Foundation	0.5
Nuskin Foundation	0.3



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