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The Zen of Charity Giving in China: An Understanding of the Chinese Philanthropic Sector and Recommendations on Moving Towards Sustainability

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Abstract

China has shifted from a centrally planned to a market based economy in 1978. Since then, the country has experienced rapid economic growth and social development. With a more liberal economic environment, the voice of civil society becomes stronger, which incentivizes the emergence of philanthropy and charitable giving. As a result, the government has begun to encourage private donation and development of foundations, while watching carefully and constraining its activities. By analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data, this paper explores and evaluates the effectiveness of this emerging sector. The paper further advocates for improving current charity law and developing a sustainable giving model. Policy recommendations will be given to address issues in shaping a better future of the philanthropic sector.