

# The New Linkage of the “Five Social Organizations” Helps the New Synergy of Grassroots Governance

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**Abstract:** Community governance at the grassroots level is the basis for building a social governance pattern of co-governance, co-construction and sharing. Based on the reflection and summary of the shortcomings in the practice and exploration of the “three-community linkage” governance path, based on the successful experience of grassroots epidemic prevention and control, combined with the practical background of social environment support and cultivation, a new approach to explore the “five-community linkage” governance path at the grassroots level is proposed.

## 1. Introduction

As the last mile of grass-roots governance, community plays an important role as the basic unit of governance in the social governance pattern of “co-governance, co-construction and sharing” and receives more and more attention. In the deployment and practice during the epidemic prevention period, the community was taken as the basic field, and the community cooperated with social organizations, social charity resources and a large number of community volunteers to jointly prevent the epidemic, showing efficient and accurate grassroots governance effectiveness. At the same time, the Opinions on Strengthening the modernization of Grassroots Governance System and governance Capacity issued by The State Council in 2021 (hereinafter referred to as the Opinions) clearly requires “innovating the linkage mechanism between communities and social organizations, social workers, community volunteers, and social charity resources,” which provides new impetus and paths for multi-agent community governance<sup>[1]</sup>. However, the division of power and resources and the division of different roles brought about by the integration of new governance subjects are bound to cause more discussion and exploration. Therefore, this paper analyzes the profound connotation and practical needs of the exploration of “linkage of the five social organizations” as a new path for grassroots governance, and explores and summarizes the space for its future development.

## 2. The New Path of “Five Cooperatives” Linkage and Its Elements Connotation

The “five societies” clearly pointed out in the “Opinions” that the main body involved is “the linkage of communities, social organizations, social workers, community volunteers, and social charity resources.” In summary, it is a new community governance mechanism under the leadership of grassroots party organizations, guided by the needs of residents, based on the community as a platform, based on social organizations as a carrier, supported by social work professionals, supported by community volunteer service teams, and boosted by social charity resources. The goal of promoting multi-subject coordination and co-governance and improving the effectiveness of community governance is an innovative exploration to realize residents' self-management and self-service capabilities and promote the formation of a pattern of co-construction, co-governance and sharing.

However, in the process of specific policy implementation, it is necessary to explore the new path of grass-roots governance of the “five cooperatives”, how to deconstruct and introduce the two

major subjects, “community volunteers” and “social charity resources”, which are expanded from “three cooperatives” to “five cooperatives”, and whether the focus of the original three major entities has changed. Through literature review, the author conducts a profound deconstruction from the main body of the governance network of “five social organizations”.

**Community:** Take the community as the field, face the needs of community residents, find and solve problems, provide public services, and realize community autonomy. In the linkage of “five cooperatives”, as the basic field of residents' daily life and as the basic unit of governance, the essence of community is the carrier to realize the function of autonomy. However, due to its function and role requirements in the governance link, the community is set up a fixed two-committee organization, the administrative level is managed by the street level, and the activities are organized around the life of residents in the development of affairs, so that the community as a grassroots governance platform to participate in the overall construction of social governance. Therefore, as a platform and field for resource integration and service supply, it is particularly important to clarify the responsibility boundary between the government and communities and social organizations, strengthen the authorization of communities, and create a free and open and shared field atmosphere.

**Social organizations:** established with community residents as the main body. In the process of serving the people in urban and rural communities, a public welfare and charity mechanism is formed, and a neighborhood mutual assistance development system is established to ensure that the activities of social organizations are enriched by combining sports, entertainment and rural production technology services. It emphasizes that the members of social organizations are initiated and established by residents, which increases the mechanism of mutual trust between the two community committees to a certain extent, and at the same time, it is more clear and accurate to serve the problems and needs of the community.

**Social work:** Refer to professional and technical personnel engaged in specialized social service work in social welfare, social assistance, social charity, labor security, medical and health care, judicial correction and other social service institutions who have passed the national professional level evaluation of social workers. We should distinguish between social workers and community workers, emphasize the professionalism of social workers, and prevent them from becoming “errand runners” and substitutes for the administrative work of the two committees of service and community.

**Community volunteers:** The main body of community volunteers is college students, volunteers, caring people, etc., and their actions show the characteristics of individuals or organizations. When participating in the supply of community services, community volunteers have the advantages of flexibility, large number, easy to convene, and wider coverage of people and regions.

**Community charity resources:** Refer to all social resources such as material, capital, technology and services available and disposable by the community to respond to community needs, provide community services, solve community problems and promote community governance. It includes poverty alleviation, helping the elderly, helping the needy, rescuing orphans, assisting the disabled, and rescuing accidents, natural disasters and some sudden public health events, and jointly promoting the comprehensive development of many undertakings such as sports, sports and health on the basis of reducing the losses caused by the above contents<sup>[2]</sup>.

### **3. The Inevitability of the “Linkage of the Five Social Organizations”**

#### **3.1 Deficiencies and Implementation Deviations of the “Three-Social Linkage”**

Since the concept of the linkage of the three communities was put forward in 2004, and then to the 2017 Opinions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and The State Council on Strengthening and Improving Urban and Rural Community Governance clearly pointed out that the exploration of the community-level governance model of “community, social workers and social organizations” has begun to explore relevant models across the country, forming different linkage models such as endogenous, embedded and connected. However, due to the

different development orientation of different regions and different communities, the “three-community linkage” model gradually presents fragmentation and unbalanced development, and even exists in name and real separation. For example, Yan Kegao (2020), based on the analysis of 10 typical communities, finds that some communities in eastern, central and western regions of China generally have misinterpretation, substitution, form and resistance to linkage in the linkage when exploring the “three-community linkage” model. At the same time, based on the governance field of the community, in the face of the coordination and cooperation between multiple subjects, there are conflicts of interest and friction involving the allocation of resources and the division of functions and roles, and the establishment of a mutual trust mechanism is extremely important. However, in reality, because the two committees of the community are the leading core institutions in the field to a certain extent, their policy cognition on the “interaction of the three communities” is very important. As well as the degree of trust and friendliness of different subjects entering the community, it directly determines the quality of community activities, and even affects the effectiveness and long-term nature of the establishment of community governance mechanisms. However, An Jianzeng (2021) found that in the process of “three-social linkage”, the secretaries of the two committees of some communities were driven by subjective limited rationality such as unrestrained emotions, disregard of professional ethics, and deviation of governance concepts in the process of policy implementation, resulting in the establishment of the “three-social linkage” mechanism with empty goals, difficulty in advancing the process, and emphasis on political achievements. After the exploration and practice of the “three-social linkage” path, we found that the linkage of the three major entities in the collaborative network reflected universal problems through later research. These problems not only have difficult reasons for the interaction of multiple entities, but also have pain points and difficulties in the implementation of policies and the construction of grassroots governance systems. With the continuous increase of social capital, the continuous maturity of civil society and the continuous growth of service demands of community residents, the “three-society linkage” model has been difficult to meet the needs.

### **3.2 The Practical Needs of Community Grass-Roots Governance**

Through the rich experience gained in epidemic prevention and control in China, it is found that with community epidemic prevention as the basic unit, social workers as volunteers have entered the community epidemic prevention system on a large scale. Through the “online + offline” approach, professional services such as psychological counseling, scientific knowledge popularization, integration and social support have been widely carried out in communities, isolation points and other frontline positions. It has contributed to the success of epidemic prevention and control; At the same time, as a group of volunteers, they are active in quarantine points, information registration offices, material transportation points and other places, giving full play to their flexibility and autonomy as the best manpower, and are regarded as the main force to solve the urgent, difficult, anxious and longing of residents<sup>[3]</sup>. At the same time, the large number of donations in the epidemic prevention process highlights the powerful power of public welfare and charitable resources, and their doubling has expanded the role of social workers in the link of resources. The participation of social workers in the fight against the epidemic not only increases their ability to link their own resources, but also expands their social capital in their own industry and in the public welfare and charity industry. Social workers, community social organizations, community volunteers and community charity resources converged on the grassroots field of the community to fight a beautiful community epidemic prevention war. Therefore, under the remarkable results achieved, it is necessary and inevitable to further explore the mode of “five-social linkage” in the grassroots governance path along the experience.

### **3.3 The Social Environment Supports and Nurtures**

The support of policies and institutions leads the change of social thought. In fact, as early as March of the same year when the Opinions were issued, the 14th Five-Year Plan and the outline of the 2035 Vision Goals in the part of “Actively guiding social forces to participate in grassroots governance” clearly proposed that “smooth and regulate the channels for market players, new social

classes, social workers and volunteers to participate in social governance, support and develop social work service agencies and voluntary service organizations,” Expand the volunteer team, build more volunteer service platforms, and improve the volunteer service system.” The promotion of community-level governance is included in the strategic deployment of national social governance, and the tone of the modernization of community-level governance capacity and governance system is laid from the top-level design. Therefore, the transformation of social governance ideas promotes the development of social civilization. At the same time, with the continuous consolidation of economic foundation, the progressive growth of national wealth and the rise of social charity spirit provide material guarantee for the transformation of governance ideas. Therefore, under the guidance of the national party building, under the vigorous spirit of social charity, and under the guidance of the thought of co-governance and shared governance, the development of “five social linkage” is inevitable and constructive.

#### **4. The Five Cooperatives Jointly Build a New Pattern of Grassroots Governance**

From the perspective of concept and connotation, the concept of “linkage of five social organizations” is developed on the basis of “linkage of three social organizations”. Its core is still to realize multi-subject interaction through the construction of multi-organization cooperation network, and then realize the public service supply mode of community autonomy. The key is to pay attention to the connection of cooperation network and the joint construction of main body interaction, and the construction of network is the foundation. Interaction is the practice of facing the needs of residents, and its whole should present a benign and open development mode. In the grass-roots community governance pattern based on the “three communes”, how to build and absorb new subjects in the linkage of static network and dynamic interaction of subjects is the key.

##### **4.1 Enhancing the Role of Government Organizations in Leading and Dividing Responsibilities and Powers**

The linkage work of “five cooperatives” is to give full play to community party organizations and community neighborhood committees to scientifically lead social organizations, social workers and community volunteers to give full play to their respective advantages, and make full use of community charity resources to actively participate in community governance and service innovation, so as to achieve a pattern of interconnection, complementarity and mutual promotion, co-construction, sharing and common prosperity among multiple subjects. Secondly, we should continue to “reduce the burden” and “empower” the community. For the former, it is important to minimize community “functions.” Clarify the boundaries of responsibilities between the government and community and social organizations, so as to provide more energy for community residents to cultivate and develop social organizations and social workers; It is helpful to encourage the government to implement the purchase of services from social organizations and community work agencies, rather than simply handing the task to the community.

##### **4.2 Interconnection of the Five Social Entities**

With community, social work, and community social organizations as the core, social workers play the function of resource integration and link, help communities and community social organizations make better use of surrounding resources, such as property management, relevant departments, etc., and promote the construction of a diversified community governance community: With the development of community organizing power and rallying power, the in-depth exploration of social workers and the leadership of community social organizations, the community volunteer service force has been continuously consolidated, and finally realized the “five community linkage” model with the “three communities” as the core, mobilizing the public welfare and charity resources around the community and the volunteer service force to jointly help the community governance, so as to continuously expand the volunteer service team<sup>[4]</sup>. Promote the solution of difficult problems in community governance.

### 4.3 Adequate Absorption of Social Organizations and Social Charity Resources

Community social organizations, as public service providers and community service providers, play a role in providing refined services for community residents, mining community backbone, cultivating community elites, and driving residents to participate in community affairs. Relying on community social organizations, it helps residents to understand their own rights, cultivate participation ability, cultivate community talents, expand governance teams, and pay attention to the connection of various resources to achieve the service efficiency of the “five social linkage” mechanism. Whether community social organizations can play a good role in community governance needs the injection of professional strength - social work<sup>[5]</sup>. Social workers help community social organizations form an integrated concept and technology, and solve the problem of lack of normative guidance and technical support in community social organizations through supervision methods, including internal governance and project management skills, so as to avoid loose management and fuzzy content. Ultimately, social workers can play the role of resource linkage. They can solve the problem of resource scarcity in community social organizations, and solve the issue that community social organizations struggled to provide sustained resident needs due to intuitive actions. As the community's disposable and accessible community charity resources, community social enterprises make good use of community social enterprises to undertake and operate community projects according to the needs of community residents, focusing on meeting the actual needs of community residents, operating projects openly and transparently, and operating income goes into community foundations to feed community development and governance. In addition to community foundations and community social enterprises, In the future, more diversified philanthropic resources should be tapped.

### 5. Conclusion

As an innovative act of community governance with Chinese characteristics, the “five cooperatives” linkage fully mobilizes the enthusiasm of multiple entities at the community level, effectively realizes the complementary advantages, brings different experiences to community residents, and reflects excellent design advantages. As an upgraded version of the “three cooperatives” linkage, the “five cooperatives” linkage has more diverse participants, more complete structures, and more abundant resources. This mechanism gathers the grassroots government, communities, social organizations, resident units, enterprises, social workers, volunteers, community residents and other forces, integrates the political capital, economic capital, social capital, cultural capital, human capital and other resources in the community field, and consolidates the grassroots governance as the cornerstone of national governance.

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