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# Research Support for China's Public Policy

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# Outline

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- I. Introduction: the Context of China's public policy
- II. China's Public Policy System
- III. Policy research for public policy
- IV. Health System Research: A case

# I - Introduction: the context

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## □ Public Policy

- The combination of basic decisions, commitments, and actions made by those who hold or affect government positions of authority.

## □ Public Policy Process

- Agenda, Alternatives and deliberation, Decision, Implementation

## □ Process models

- Muddling through; Garbage can; Institutional analysis; Punctuated-equilibrium framework...

# Specific Examples of Policies in the Chinese Context:

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- National--Strategic directions
  - Openness and reform; health system reform;
- National legislations, administrative ordinance, and national plans;
  - E.g. Law on emergency management;
  - E.g. Median and long-range S&T plan;
- Ministerial administrative decisions:
  - E.g. Policies to encourage indigenous innovation, MOST
- Provincial and local administrative ordinances:
  - E.g. Local government budget;
- Provincial and local government decisions:
  - E.g. to set up a development zones.

## II. China's Public Policy system

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- Players inside the political establishment
  - The party system—Strategic directions (SD)
  - People's Congress—SD and legislations
  - Political Consultative Conference--SD
  - State Council—administrative ordinance and national plans
  
- Players outside the political establishment
  - public organizations--SD
  - Think tanks;
  - NGOs; Media; Interest groups; and etc.
  - .....

# Characteristics of policy issues

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- First dimension—level of authority
  - National, provincial/ministerial, municipal, and local;
- Second dimension—level of expertise
  - Economic policy, foreign policy, social policy, industrial policy...
- Third dimension—level of discretion
  - Legislation, ordinances, administrative decisions;

# Policy process

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- The discussion/debate and negotiation /bargaining process among the players in and outside the formal policy system.
- The overall objective is to find consensus in the policy system, which are dependent on:
  - The distribution of authority;
  - The distribution of knowledge;
  - The distribution of discretionary power.

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- Advocacy coalition between players in and outside the formal policy system is increasingly more important:
    - Policy entrepreneur
    - Informal network and coalitions on policy issues
    - The new-triangle coalition:
      - Intellectual elite-media-NGOs

# Research support for public policy

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- Policy research offices inside the government
- Policy research organizations affiliated with the government:
  - State Council Research Office, DRC;
  - Ministerial Research Organizations, etc.
- Academic Institutions
  - Chinese academy of Social Sciences
  - Universities
- Think tanks and other organizations

## IV. Health system reform-a case

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- ❑ In 2005, State Council DRC published a report claiming that China's medical system reform has been a failure;
- ❑ The report was enthusiastically received by the public and relevant government agency was under great pressure;
- ❑ In 2006, medical system reform was brought to the policy agenda. A national leading group was formed by a coalition of 14 government agencies in September;

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- Internal policy studies by policy research organizations affiliated with Ministry of Health were arranged to focus on four major issues;
  - Six independent outside policy studies were commissioned by the leading group:
    - Three domestic policy research organizations—DRC, CCER of Peking University, and Fudan University;
    - Three international organizations—World Bank, WHO, and Mckinsey;

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- ❑ A major policy conference was convened in 2007 to discuss the 6 proposals;
  - ❑ Three more unsolicited proposals were submitted to the leading group;
  - ❑ A draft of the health system reform plan was published for public critique in 2008;
  - ❑ Major revisions were done based on feedback and inputs from various groups including the public through the internet.
  - ❑ April 6, 2009, the final reform plan was published.

Thanks!

