

**Employment Policy and Sustainable Livelihoods
of Landless Peasants in China:
A Study in Zhengdong New Area**

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ABSTRACT

Landless peasants are peasants who have been deprived of their land in the process of urbanization in China and other countries. This thesis focuses on the impact of employment policies on the sustainable livelihoods of landless peasants in one of China's newly developed urban districts, Zhengdong New Area. I first provide the background of Zhengdong New Area, followed by a literature review of sustainable livelihoods, and of the role of government in the employment of landless peasants. In the analysis section, I develop an employment-related policy evaluation framework for examining the ability of landless peasants to maintain a sustainable livelihood, by detailing relevant indicators, including material and non-material aspects. I apply the policy evaluation framework to both policy design and implementation, finding that the non-material aspect of sustainable livelihoods has been largely neglected, and that the promises made to LPs in various policies have not been fulfilled. Lastly, I provide policy suggestions from a planner's perspective. In terms of policy design, I propose to define specific actions and hard numbers in which they can be measured, to give more considerations to LPs' non-material satisfaction, and to focus on the actual effects of policies. Regarding policy implementation, I propose a strengthening of supervisions, trying to cover the majority during the implementation process, and to achieve a balance between inadequate regulation and over-regulation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Urban expansion is a major global trend that takes different forms. In developed countries, urban sprawl brings populations from central urban areas to outlying low-density neighborhoods. Rapid urban growth in developing countries is constantly pushing city boundaries outward. China is a good example of this phenomenon. After 30 years of reform and opening-up policies¹, urban expansion in China has given rise to many “New Areas” or “New Districts” (*xinqu*), which are new urban districts that legally enjoy special economic and political support from the local government. New Areas are often equivalent to municipal districts in size and are located at the expanding edge of big cities. The prevalence of New Areas is due to the great enthusiasm of the Chinese central and local governments, who consider the New Areas as the pioneer of a fresh round of reform in China, which can help to explore regionally coordinated innovation and development of cities under current historical conditions. The birth and growth of New Areas is a major step toward further urbanization in China.

According to Zhou et al. (4), urbanization around the world generally manifests in two forms. One is the urbanization of people, which means a decrease of rural populations along with an increase of urban populations. For example, the urbanization rate is often

¹ In late 1978, Chinese reform and opening-up policies were introduced at the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. This marked the beginning of China’s adoption of a free market economy with central planning and the opening of China’s labor and consumer markets to foreign investment. (Gon galves)

used as a reflection of the level of urbanization in a country or region, which is the percentage of the urban population divided by the total population of cities. The other manifestation is the urbanization of land, which is an expansion of urban land along with a reduction of rural land. In China, the speed of urbanization of people is lower than that of urbanization of land. According to the 2000-2010 national census data, urban built-up areas had expanded by 64.45% in this period, while the urban population had grown by 45.9% only (Zou, Zhao, and Mason 9117). The excess of shifts in land use over the population shifts shows that the urbanization process in China as a form of *xinqu* is an unnatural process. This excess has contributed to the growth of two special social groups: landless peasants (henceforth, “LPs”) and migrant workers.

In China, LPs are peasants who have been deprived of their land during the urbanization process that began in the 1990s. LPs have been forced to complete the transition from being rural farmers to urban citizens. This is largely because the Chinese government made widespread use of a strategy similar to what in the English-speaking world is usually called “eminent domain”² to acquire the peasants’ land. However, migrant workers, who work outside of their home country, can adapt to the urban environment in an active and progressive way by spontaneously accommodating urban society. In reality, many LPs have gradually become migrant workers in cities. A comparison

² Eminent domain can be defined as “the power to take private property for public use by a state, municipality, or private person or corporation authorized to exercise functions of public character, following the payment of just compensation to the owner of that property.” (*TheFreeDictionary.com*)

between the two groups indicates that the government has many issues to address in relation to the LPs. In some cities, a large number of LPs have no choice but to be urbanized and live in resettlement areas without their cultivated fields. The situation of LPs is highly complicated. On the one hand, psychologically, they still adhere to the traditional rural lifestyle. On the other hand, they have been put into entirely planned communities, some of which do not even have adequate infrastructure for a comfortable living because they are far from previous urban boundaries. Even though in the resettlement community within the urban boundaries, many problems exist, among which the employment failure is the most conspicuous one.

According to Yang and Shi (102–109), a total of 600 million peasants will soon have lost their cultivated fields and be converted to urban citizens before the end of the Chinese urbanization process. From another perspective, this issue can be a blessing to China. By living in concentrated resettlement areas, a large number of the former peasants would have the opportunity to shift from the old, low-efficient production mode and live new lives as urban citizens; this shift can help the country advance the overall urban and rural integration process.

To help people better recognize and understand the difficulties during the transition from peasants to urban citizens, this thesis looks specifically into employment policies and their impacts on LPs' sustainable livelihoods in China, using Zhengdong New Area

as a case study. The key informants of this thesis include government officials and LPs. I investigated the two aspects through policy studies, semi-structured interviews, and observations during site visits. The first aspect is the government policy that aims to assist resettled LPs with employment, which is the independent variable. The second aspect is the sustainable livelihoods of the resettled LPs, which is the dependent variable. Then I examined these two aspects to identify inconsistencies, examined causes and made policy recommendations. I conclude that employment policies have a large impact on LPs' sustainable livelihoods, and improvements can be made from the perspective of both policy design and policy implementation.

2. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

In many cities in China, landless peasants are experiencing difficulty living in an urban society primarily due to employment-related problems. The current studies about Chinese LPs have already touched on employment problems, policy implementations, and rights protection. However, none of the work focuses on the government's role in assisting improving LPs' sustainable livelihoods. How do employment policies affect the sustainable livelihoods of LPs? What are the government's responsibilities in the process? The topic of the LPs is politically sensitive in China and first-hand interview data about them is not easy to collect. With the number of New Areas building up in China, a deficiency of this part of research may discourage future studies about LPs. Moreover, this gap between practices and research is likely to cause policy failures in improving LPs' lives, which could eventually result in social instability. Thus, I propose a research project on the impacts of employment policies on LPs' sustainable livelihoods using first-hand data. As a native of Zhengzhou City with a thorough understanding of the city's history and problems, I chose the Zhengdong New Area as site for a case study.

Zhengzhou is a city in east-central China, and it is the provincial capital of Henan Province. As the birthplace of Chinese civilization over 3,000 years ago, Henan Province has a special history and economic status in China in the 21st Century. Covering a large

part of the fertile North China Plain³, Henan is a major agricultural province with an area of 167,000 km² (64,479 sq mi), contributing more than 10% of the national grain production every year. According to the statistics at the end of 2000, Henan has a total population of 95.55 million, “with 21.47 million or 23.2 percent urban residents and 71.09 million or 76.8 percent of people living in rural areas” (*China Through A Lens*). Henan has seen rapid development in its economy over the past two decades, but it is still one of the poorest provinces in China. Poverty and a large population of peasants have become the two major issues of Henan Province.

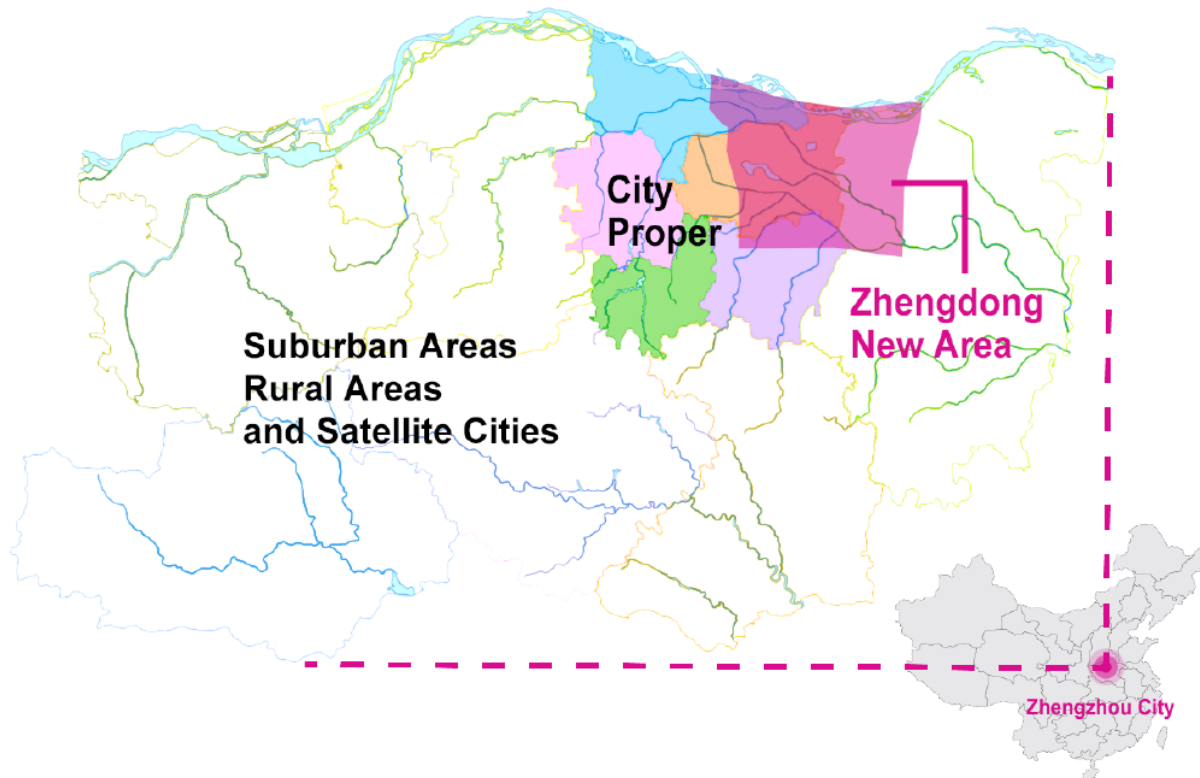


Figure 1. Geographical Location of Zhengdong New Area

Source: Map by author

³ North China Plain is the largest alluvial plain of eastern Asia.



Figure 2. Central Business District of Zhengdong New Area

Source: www.paimi.com

In 2001, Zhengzhou was a prefecture-level city with 4 million people who lived in an old town with an area of only 130 km² (50 sq mi). The population was expanding along with the city's prosperity. Driven by the pressure of the growing population and the desire for political achievements, the provincial leaders at that time started to plan a new dream city with high standards and an international appeal. The Japanese firm Kisho Kurokawa Firm won a competition to create a comprehensive urban plan for an area of 150 km² (58 sq mi), which would be nearly double the size of San Francisco. The plan consisted of five parts: the Central Business District (CBD), the Commercial and Logistics Area, the Long Lake Area, the Longzi Lake Area, and the Technology and Logistics Area. As Xue, Wang, and Tsai (223–232) put it, “After the plan was approved in

2001, 33 km² (13 sq mi) was constructed in 5 years with monumental buildings and grand plazas.” This new town developed at a fast pace, as it enjoyed tremendous support from the Chinese central government during the planning and implementation process.

This 150 km² (58 sq mi) New Area in a second-tier Chinese city has attracted people's attention since 2013. On March 3, 2013, a video titled “China’s Real Estate Bubble,” which was broadcast on *60 Minutes* in the US, stirred up a hornet’s nest in the Western world. Zhengdong New Area was infamously declared a “ghost city.” Supported by video clips and photo series, the area was described as “full of new towers with no residents, desolate condos and vacant subdivisions uninhabited for miles, and miles, and miles, and miles of empty apartments” and that “peasants are forced to leave their homes” (Stahl). The documentary showed some peasants picking up bricks for money at the site where they used to live, which now appeared to be a construction site. Some modern housing mega blocks were visible in the background. Early in 2010, the website *Business Insider* posted several pictures from Google Maps purporting to show that Zhengdong New Area had become “the biggest ghost city in China” as a result of the extremely dangerous real estate bubble (Lubin and Badkar). However, Michael Klibaner, head of Research at the Chinese property investment management firm Jones Lang LaSalle, claimed on CNBC on May 18, 2014 that there was no such real estate bubble in China (Shaffer and Holliday), as more than two-thirds of the demands in the market were

real-end users, and the industry as a whole was becoming more mature, although of course risks did exist in the market (Shaffer and Holliday). The big shift in external manifestations of the real estate market in Zhengdong New Area from 2013 to 2014 was due to the lag in construction of infrastructures, such as the heating system. Although apartments and offices had been built, prior to 2013 many people were hesitant to buy real estates or to move in. As Sun (57) indicates, “These buildings were just built in advance by developers, as the government was expanding the territories of cities, when the cost was low and then the buildings were left in an inventory with high price tag. The developers are confidently waiting for people’s income to catch up, even when this could mean a few years or even a decade.” This phenomenon is one of the characteristics of *xinqu* as an unnatural form of urbanization; developments are directed by the government instead of being driven by the market. Under the conditions discussed above, the relocation of LPs started in 2002 in response to government requirements.

Among the numerous New Areas that were established in China beginning in the 1990s, Zhengdong New Area is well-known throughout the country for its well-advertised “success” in addressing the peasant resettlement issue. More than 80,000 farmers lived in more than 100 villages within the site of Zhengdong New Area (Sun and Zhao). Today, they have all been converted to urban citizens. The local government calls the process “harmonious demolition,” and The Ministry of Land and Resources in China is currently

promoting it as a good prototype for other cities in China. According to Sun and Zhao (*Southern Metropolis Daily*), the government uses the “Two Better” policy to deal with LPs, namely, the government promises LPs better housing conditions and better lives, with the idea of pleasing the majority instead of every single person. For instance, one measure that was introduced in 2013 promised a 110 m² (1184 sq ft) standard resettlement floor area to every LP, each of whom could receive a housing area of 75 m² (807 sq ft) within one of the resettlement communities, which are offered for free by the government and located within Zhengdong New Area. Villagers then become freeholders of the homes they live in. The remaining 35 m² (377 sq ft) is set aside for use as commercial space, and LPs can use their commercial space, for example, to run small businesses. This is a much higher compensation standard than the national average, and it aims to enhance the wealth of the local LPs. The financial source for these floor areas is the land transfer. In Zhengdong New Area, local governments converted the rural land to urban land and sold it to real estate developers. Nowadays, the fixed asset investment in this thriving new area is 150 billion yuan (23 billion dollars) with more than 5 thousand companies. The housing price is three to four times the average housing price in Zhengzhou City.

The landless peasant resettlement policy of Zhengdong New Area seems to have been successful. However, behind this success there are problems that remain, among which

the employment issue is the most troublesome. Even though there are free apartments available as residences for LPs within a specific period, many young LPs in these resettlement communities choose to seek jobs in the city, trying actively to establish self-identity by finding their positions in their new lives. Based on *Zhengzhou Zhengdong New District Investment Environment Study 2009* (KPMG), there are over 240,000 people entering Zhengzhou's job market each year and monthly salaries are typically below 3000 yuan (463 dollars), indicating a large labor pool in the city. Without a good educational background and set of professional skills, LPs are experiencing a hard time competing with the original urban citizens in finding jobs. The government has introduced a series of policies that aim to assist LPs in finding jobs. For example, as Yi (16) indicates, the government of Jinshui District has opened professional skills training classes for more than two thousand peasants who lost their land during the resettlement process of Zhengdong New Area. The local government has also contacted companies to open special recruitment channels for former peasants relying on the labor resource market.

The literature review below presents the existing studies on sustainable livelihoods and on the role of the government in the employment of LPs.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

The existing literature which is highly related to the topic of this thesis can be grouped into two categories: studies on sustainable livelihoods, and studies on the role of government in the employment of LPs. The first part can be helpful in providing an international context and an inventory of sustainable livelihoods' indicators. The second part allows a close examination of existing studies on the employment issue with a focus on the value of government behaviors.

The concept of “sustainable livelihoods” was first formally used in 1992 by Robert and Gordon, who described it as “a livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living: a livelihood is sustainable which can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the short and long term” (Robert and Gordon 10). This definition goes beyond the traditional purpose associated with the idea, which is to eliminate poverty, but it becomes highly broad in meanings. Scoones (5), noting the term's vagueness, consider “sustainable livelihoods” applicable to many issues, and the debates about the relationship between environment and poverty cannot encompass all meanings of the term. Figure 3 illustrates Ashley and Carney's (56) interpretation of the

sustainable livelihood framework, which was developed from Scoones's model (Scoones 4). This framework shows several factors that either constrain or add to livelihood opportunities and how they can interact with each other. Most importantly, this framework shows that it is possible to achieve a series of livelihood outcomes, which include "more income, increased well-being, reduced vulnerability, improved food security, more sustainable use of natural resources base," by using specific strategies (Ashley and Carney 56).

Figure 3 presents a model for measuring sustainable livelihoods Ashley and Carney. The question that then needs to be addressed is whether any more comprehensive measurement system exists. Hoon, Singh, and Wanmali (20) claim that sustainable livelihood indicators can be identified based on different contexts, which may vary. They further provide an asset approach by listing tentative indicators of measurement, including land, dwellings, and time. In 2001, the United Nations listed "unemployment rate" as one of the frequently used indicators of sustainable livelihoods (United Nations 17) to emphasize the effect of a person's employment situation on his or her sustainable livelihood. Although the main focus is on the poor, the sustainable livelihood framework offers people a "more centered, holistic, and multi-level understanding" of ways that people make a living (Julie and Alex 6). For the above reasons, Julie and Alex (6) show that the sustainable livelihood framework is a helpful tool for examining the effects of

urban-rural transformation on a sustainable level.

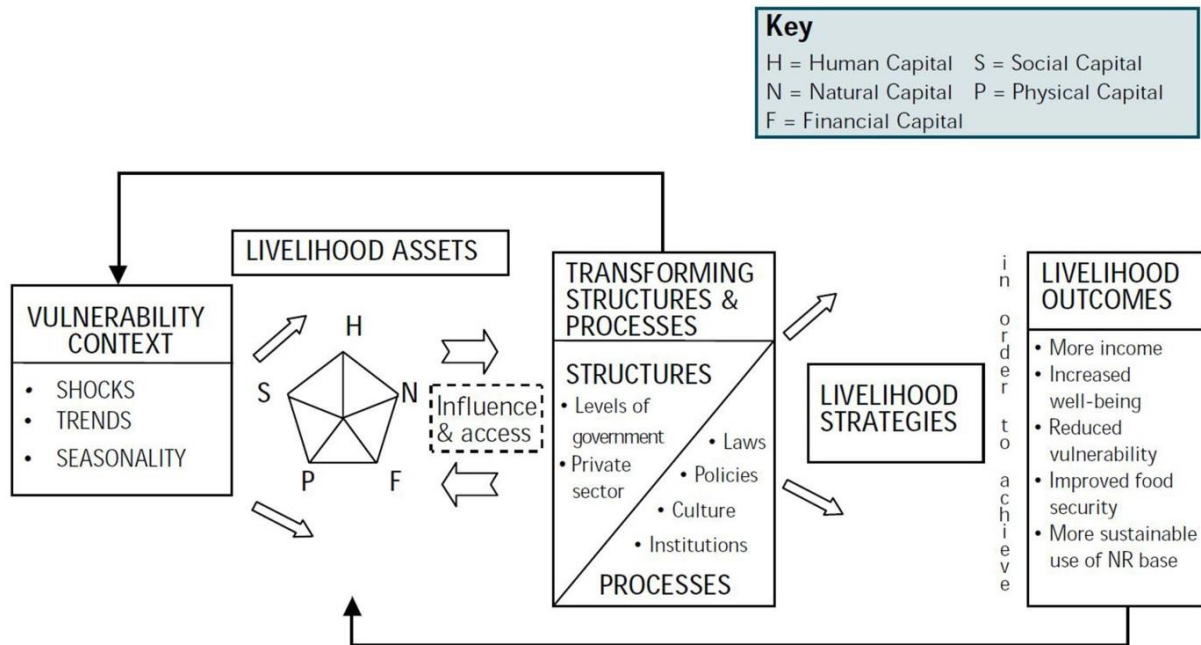


Figure 3. A Sustainable Livelihood Framework⁴
 Source: Ashley and Carney (56)

Employment involves a contractual relationship between members of two different social groups: employers and employees (Dakin and Armstrong 187–194). As employees, LPs can face many problems. As Zhu (39) points out, “although landless peasants are living a different urban-like lifestyle and report that the living standards are better off comparing to those of before, the current employment situation of landless peasants is not optimistic in all aspects.” Yang and Wang (9–11) note that LPs are disadvantaged in the competition for employment because they lack the job skills most urban natives possess. Consequently, LPs mostly enter labor-intensive industries, including the service

⁴ (NR = natural resources)

industry, which Zhu (39) argues is likely to become for LPs the principal future pool of employment opportunities.

Zhu (38-42) recognizes the deciding role of the government in the employment issue of LPs. King (*Actively Seeking Work?: The Politics of Unemployment and Welfare Policy in the United States and Great Britain*) claims that, three types of government interventions can be applied to deal with unemployment problems: directly connecting job seekers with job positions through policies, improving job seekers' skills through training, and offering financial subsidies in the form of social welfare. In practice, we can witness different (sometimes innovative) approaches on distinct local conditions. Take the case study of this thesis, Zhengdong New Area, as an example. Most organizations and institutions within Zhengdong New Area's municipal boundaries, which integrate arable land into their development, are required by the government to hire LPs to constitute a certain percentage of their workforce.

The existing literature includes more specific studies. Government behaviors in terms of the employment training of LPs are closely examined by Lu, He, and Wang (4-12). A case study of the Wanmu Orchards in Guangzhou⁵ describes the dilemmas posed by the present government's behaviors, and the authors present a proposal for the improvement of employment training. Their proposal includes recommendations such

⁵ Guangzhou City is the capital of Guangdong Province in South China.

as combining the strength of the government, the market, and society; relying on multiple funding sources; establishing an integrated evaluation system; and encouraging innovations (Lu, He, and Wang 10-12). Another article by Liu (146-147), points out that the key to realizing satisfactory levels of employment for LPs is enhancing the quality of personnel by investing in personal education. Only in this way can LPs increase their competitiveness and find jobs in an urban society. Liu also claims that the training courses provided by governments should be designed differently based on LPs' gender, age, and educational level (Liu 147). Unfortunately, in my opinion, the feasibility of this idea in China today may be limited, because of the financial weakness of many local governments.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Design

To find out *if employment policies have positive impacts on LPs' sustainable livelihoods*, I adopt the case study approach as the primary research method in this thesis. Information is collected from semi-structured interviews, field observations, and policy documents. Then, starting from an employment-related indicator system of sustainable livelihoods, I examine the impacts of employment policies on each of the indicators used in the case study.

4.2 Variable Selection

The independent variable in this thesis is the employment policy in Zhengdong New Area. The dependent variable is the LPs' level of sustainable livelihood, which is reflected in an evaluation framework that consists of several indicators that are considered relevant to the employment topic. With the sustainable livelihood framework developed by Ashley and Carney (56) as the starting point, I develop an evaluation framework, as shown in Figure 4. First, the definition of sustainable livelihoods includes both poverty elimination and psychological satisfaction (Robert and Gordon 10). Thus, two major categories of indicators are established, namely, material aspect and non-material aspect. Secondly, I place income, occupation, and profitable real estate under the category of the

material aspect. Income and occupation are usually closely tied to the employment situation. Profitable real estate is included because Zhengdong New Area is known for distributing storefront areas besides from housing areas as a compensation method. Thirdly, education and level of inclusion are included under the non-material aspect. Finally, there are further divisions under each indicator, as shown in Figure 4, to enhance the accuracy of the evaluation system.

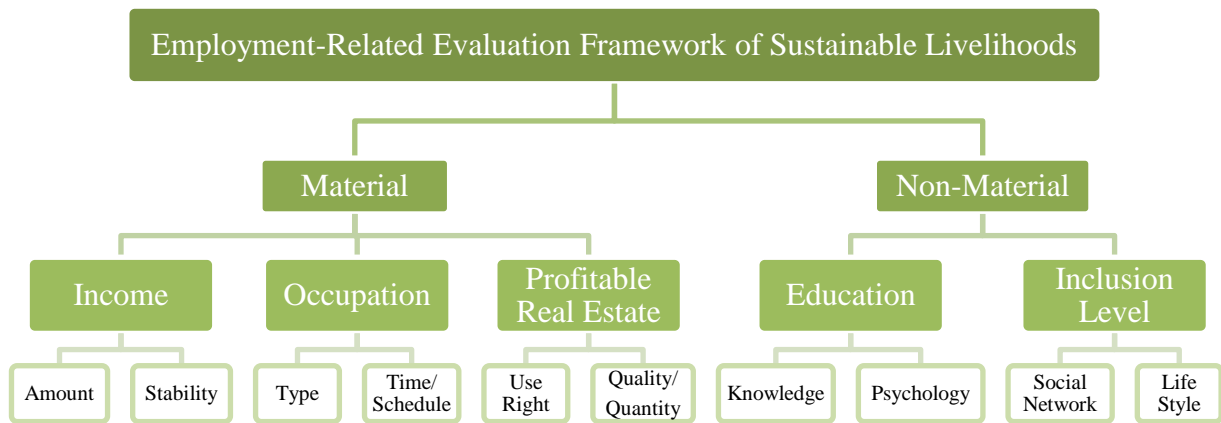


Figure 4. Employment-Related Evaluation Framework of Sustainable Livelihoods

Source: Designed by author

This evaluation system has a clear structure. When designing it, I considered both the general connotations of sustainable livelihoods and China's actual conditions. In the Analysis and Discussions part, I will use this evaluation system to examine the ability of LPs to maintain a sustainable livelihood. Thus, we would know whether a policy is helpful for LPs' sustainable livelihoods.

Control variables in this research include: all studied LPs are from the resettlement residential areas within the administrative boundary of Zhengdong New Area; all studied LPs have all been granted the urban *hukou*⁶ by the government.

4.3 Data Collection

First, I evaluated employment policies from official government documents by interpreting meanings and explaining correlations. Then I obtained information about the livelihood situation of LPs' from semi-structured interviews and observations of LPs and policy implementers. To ensure that best questions were being asked, semi-structured interviews and observations were conducted in a bottom-up sequence; LPs were the first to be interviewed, followed by policy implementers.

This thesis studies the employment situation of LPs. Thus, looking at subjects who have settled down for a long time after their resettlement is ideal. The housing demolition and relocation process of Zhengdong New Area started in 2002, and many resettled communities have been developing for years. It is worth mentioning that, under the overall policy framework of Zhengdong New Area, local communities are given certain freedoms in terms of formulating their own detailed policies and implementation processes. Therefore, selecting communities that are geographically close to each other is

⁶ A *hukou* is a household registration record required by law in China.

helpful for noticing the minor local differences. Four “mature” communities, which have been developed for years, were selected for interviews: No.2 Zhacheng Community, Longgang New, Town Jiagang Community, Miao Zhang Community, No.8 Jinzhuang Dongba Community. These communities are all geographically located within the Phase I area of Zhengdong New Area, and are relatively close to each other (Figure 6). Individuals in these communities were interviewed at random; the targeted number of LP interviewees was 10. Then, interviews were conducted with the staff of the town/neighborhood offices on the basis of information obtained from LPs residing here. Finally, government officials at higher levels in related departments were interviewed. Policy implementers were selected randomly; the targeted number was 5.



Figure 5. Main Entrance of Zhacheng Community

Source: Photo by author

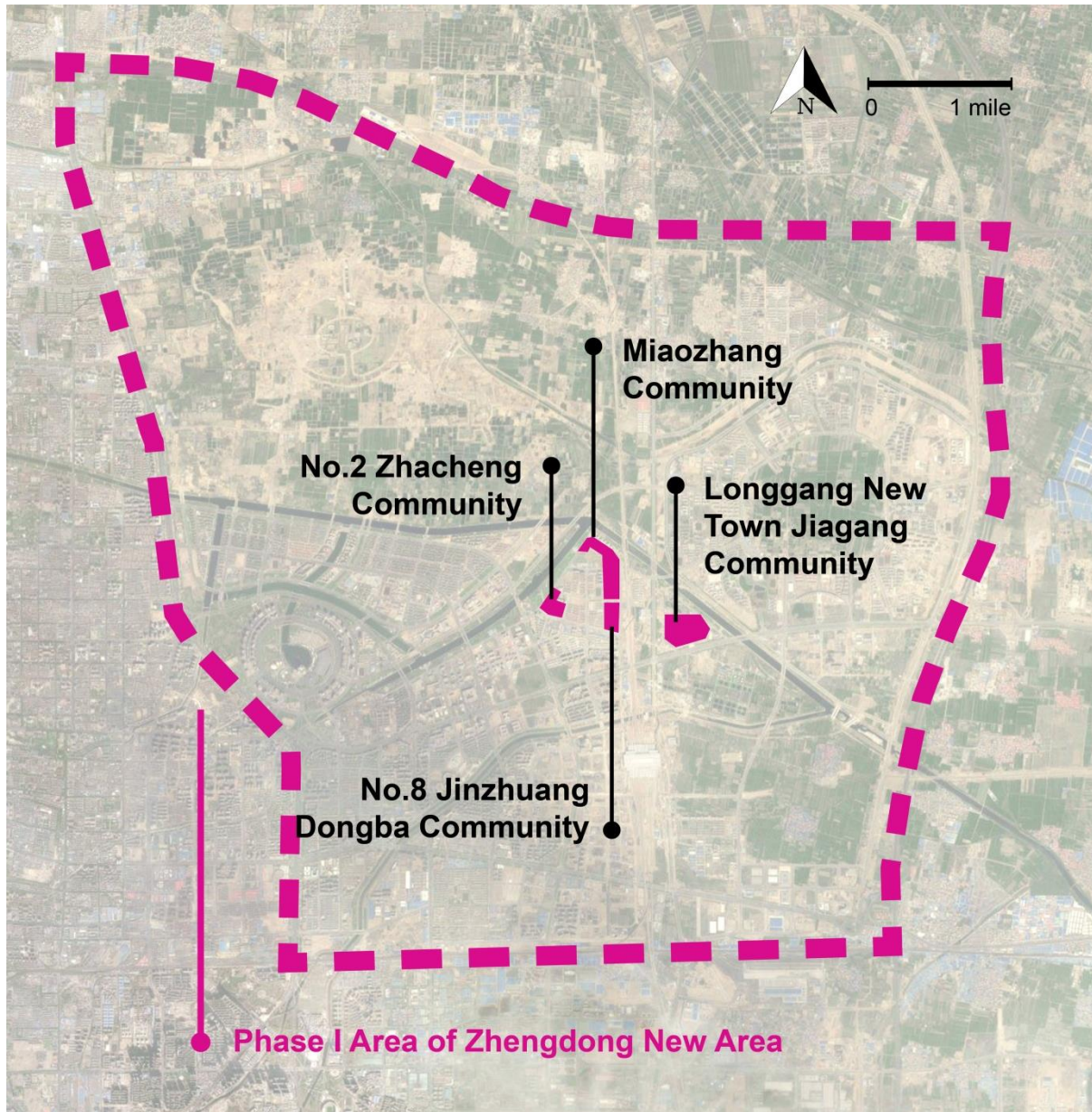


Figure 6. Location of Four Sampled Communities

Source: Baidu Map

5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

5.1 Policy Design

5.1.1 District-level Policies

In Zhengdong New Area, the resettlement of landless peasants is a long-term and highly complicated task. With in-depth practice, employment policies on the district level have been updated continually by the government over time, and numerous documents have been involved in the process. In general, there are two policy documents that are both instructive and highly relevant to the employment issue, which are released by the Zhengzhou City government and Zhengdong New Area government respectively: *Notice from Zhengzhou Government towards the Resettlement Issue in Zhengdong New Area*⁷, and *Opinions from Zhengdong New Area Administrative Committee on Landless Peasants' Employment Training and Social Security*⁸. After examining the policies at the district level, four main categories of policies are identified that can assist LPs in obtaining jobs:

- **Creating job opportunities**

The *Notice from Zhengzhou Government towards the Resettlement Issue in Zhengdong New Area* (2) states that, “The government should give employment priority to landless

⁷ 《郑州市人民政府关于郑东新区征地拆迁安置工作有关问题的通知》郑政文 [2002] 161 号

⁸ 《郑东新区管理委员会关于被征地农民就业培训和社会保障的实施意见》郑东文 [2011] 114 号

peasants. The government has the responsibility to actively guide landless peasants to make full use of the resettlement land and to broaden employment channels.” This policy sounds like a guideline; responsibilities of the government were defined, but no specific actions or hard numbers are assigned. As the policy indicates, local communities can design their own measures based on local conditions. For instance, many communities in Zhengdong New Area regulate that organizations and companies within their municipal boundaries, that integrate arable land into their development, are required to hire LPs as a certain percentage of their workforce. For example, the new campus of Henan University of Economics and Law locates in the Longzi Lake Area in Zhengdong New Area, had to hire a number of LPs as the condition to use the land. However, in other communities, there are no similar measures, indicating potential problems.

- **Distributing storefronts**

Notice from Zhengzhou Government towards the Resettlement Issue in Zhengdong New Area (2) provides the compensation standard of LPs for taking their land, namely, “The resettlement floor area for each landless peasant is 45 m² (484 sq ft). Aside from receiving a 30 m² (323 sq ft) residential area, every landless peasant can receive a 15 m² (161 sq ft) business frontage area.” It has been 14 years since the introduction of this standard. Recently, the city and the district government have realized that, along with

the economy growth and the development of society, compensation standards should not be fixed numbers. Thus, local communities have the right to determine specific numbers of the distributed storefront areas nowadays. Although the numbers set in this policy are not working any more, it provides a good start point for compensating LPs; distributing storefronts is a creative compensation method, which is first used on LPs in Zhengdong New Area. However, too much flexibility at the community level causes many problems, which I will discuss later.

- **Providing monetary compensation**

The policy regarding providing monetary compensation is detailed and explicit, “Landless peasants who have participated in the basic old-age insurance and have made the payment can benefits. Women of age 16 to 45 and men of age 16 to 50 can enjoy monthly employment financial aid of 160 yuan (25 dollars) for 2 years. Women of age 45 to 55 and men of age 50 to 60 can enjoy monthly employment financial aid of 380 yuan (59 dollars) for 10 years. This amount of money is a one-time subsidy” (*Opinions from Zhengdong New Area Administrative Committee on Landless Peasants' Employment Training and Social Security* 3). The clarity in number in this policy shows the rigorous attitude of the government toward money. No problems can be detected from the perspective of policy design.

- **Providing employment training courses**

In *Opinions from Zhengdong New Area Administrative Committee on Landless Peasants' Employment Training and Social Security (8-9)*, there is a chapter about providing employment training courses for LPs, “The government should put landless peasants into the urban employment service system, and a landless peasant can enjoy one free vocational training organized by the government, which include guiding training, entrepreneurship training, and vocational training.” Guiding training includes training of civic morality, professional ethics, changing how LPs think about employment in the city, laws, and regulations. Entrepreneurship training is prepared for LPs who want to start up businesses themselves. Vocational training is the most common training category, which includes the long-term training (the course duration is more than 1 year) and the short-term training (the course duration is less than 1 year). Besides, training subsidies are provided to LPs who participate in the training courses. From Table 1, we can see different amount of subsidies are granted to LPs involving in different training courses. LPs in the long-term vocational training courses can obtain 3400 yuan (525 dollars), while LPs in guiding training courses can only get 100 yuan (15 dollars). On the other hand, LPs are supposed to spend much more time for the long-term vocational training courses. Thus, a higher subsidy does not necessarily mean a more attractive option for LPs. Also, how LPs value these training courses directly decides the effects of this policy.

Table 1. Policy on Training Sessions

Types of Training Courses	Subdivisions or Explanations	Subsidies (per capita)
Guiding training	Training of civic morality, professional ethics, mindset changing about employment, laws, and regulations	100 yuan (\$15)
Entrepreneurship training	Prepared for LPs who want to start up businesses themselves	1000 yuan (\$154)
Vocational training	Long-term training (more than 1 year)	3400 yuan (\$523)
	Short-term training (less than 1 year)	400-600 yuan (\$61-\$92) Basing on profession differences

Source: Opinions from Zhengdong New Area Administrative Committee on Landless Peasants' Employment Training and Social Security (8-9)

5.1.2 Community-level Measures

At the community level, measures that fall under the major policy framework are highly flexible, but official documents are difficult to find in the public realm in China. Because of the data constraint, I have only got the full and accurate policy-related documents of the Longhu Office, namely, *2014 Work Summary of Department of Employment and Social Security Department in Longhu Office*⁹ and *2015 Work Summary of Department of Employment and Social Security Department in Longhu Office*¹⁰. These two documents are work summaries written by government officials, and they not only include specific measures at the community level, but also show the implementation results in the form of public record. The Longhu Office was established in July 2012. The administrative area covered by this office is 28.3 km² (11 sq mi) and it is located at the

⁹ 《龙湖办事处劳动保障所 2014 年工作总结》

¹⁰ 《龙湖办事处劳动保障所 2015 年工作总结》

center of Zhendong New Area. There are two communities with a population of 18,700 under the Longhu Office. One of the four communities where I interviewed, No 2 Zhacheng Community, is under the jurisdiction of the Longhu Office. The Longhu Office has a good reputation for the measures it applies in dealing with LPs, which makes it a good example to look into in this Thesis. Table 2 shows a summary of measures at the district level, which correspond to the four categories of policies for helping LPs obtain jobs.

As shown in Table 2, the community-level measures of the Longhu Office in 2014 and 2015 were following the policy guidelines of the district level. For creating job opportunities, the Longhu Office collected job information from local large-scale job fairs and conveys the information to LPs in multiple ways. Also, the Longhu Office contacted employers and organize career fairs especially for LPs. For distributing business areas, the Longhu Office provided each LP with a 35 m² (377 sq ft) business frontage area aside from a 75 m² (807 sq ft) residential area. This was a higher compensation standard than the policy requirements in 2002, which I think is a normal phenomenon because the compensation standard is supposed to increase along with the economy growth and the development of society. For monetary compensation, however, measures had an innovation based on the policy guidance, “every LP receives 1020 yuan (157 dollars) per month as a combination of living allowance and employment financial

aid” (2014, 2015 Work Summary of Department of Employment and Social Security Department in Longhu Office). For the last policy category, providing employment training courses, the Longhu Office provided various training courses on cooking, nursing, electrical skills, and beauty skills, based on the public record. However, the actual number of participants of courses showed in the record is worth pondering. Take the record of 2014 as an example, three vocational training courses were provided by the Longhu Office: cooking, nursing and electrician, lasting for 10 days, 15 days, and 15 days respectively. 112 trainees were trained, while the LP population in Longhu Office is 18,700; only a small portion of LPs were involved in the training courses.

Government officials in the Longhu Office have come up with some additional measures, which concern the inspection of LPs’ employers. In many Chinese cities, wage arrears and harsh working conditions of vulnerable groups have become serious social problems. Between December 1, 2015 and February 8, 2016, a high concentration of unrest was observed in Henan, Guangdong, Hebei, and Shandong, “with multiple protests by construction workers occurring in several major cities such as Zhengzhou (23 incidents) and Chengdu (21 incidents)” (*China Labour Bulletin*). Therefore, this factor is given much consideration at the community level in designing measures.

Table 2. Summary of Policies and Measures in Four Policy Categories

Policies and Measures Category of Employment Policy	District-level Policies (Released by Zhengdong New Area Government)		Community-level Measures (Released by Longhu Office in 2014 and 2015)	
	Content Summary	Source Document	Content Summary	Source Document
Creating job opportunities	The government should give employment priority to landless peasants. The government has the responsibility to actively guide landless peasants to make full use of the resettlement land and to broaden employment channels.	<i>"Notice from Zhengzhou Government towards the Resettlement Issue in Zhengdong New Area"</i>	Collect job information from local large-scale job fairs and convey the information to landless peasants in multiple ways. Contact employers and organize career fairs especially for landless peasants.	<i>"2014 Work Summary of Department of Employment and Social Security Department in Longhu Office"</i> <i>"2015 Work Summary of Department of Employment and Social Security Department in Longhu Office"</i>
Distributing storefronts	Aside from receiving residential areas, every landless peasant can receive a fixed floor area for business use, which can potentially provide employment opportunities.		Aside from receiving a 75 m2 (807 sq ft) residential floor area, every landless peasant can receive a 35 m2 (377 sq ft) business frontage area.	
Providing monetary compensation	Landless peasants who have participated in the basic old-age insurance and have made the payment can benefits. Women of age 16 to 45 and men of age 16 to 50 can enjoy monthly employment financial aid of 160 yuan (25 dollars) for 2 years. Women of age 45 to 55 and men of age 50 to 60 can enjoy monthly employment financial aid of 380 yuan (59 dollars) for 10 years. This amount of money is a one-time subsidy.	<i>"Opinions from Zhengdong New Area Administrative Committee on Landless Peasants' Employment Training and Social Security"</i>	Every landless peasant receives 1020 yuan (157 dollars) per month as a combination of living allowance and employment financial aid.	
Providing employment training courses	The government should put landless peasants into the urban employment service system, and a landless peasant can enjoy one free vocational training organized by the government, which include mental training, entrepreneurship training, and vocational skills training. Training subsidies are provided to landless peasants who participate in the courses.		Offer different training courses on cooking, nursing, electrical skills, and beauty skills, among others.	
			Labor inspection of landless peasants' employers. Tasks include preventing wage arrears, preventing work in hot weather, and routine inspections.	

5.1.3 Policy Design Evaluation

Does the table above show a fully optimistic picture of LPs’ employment? Not necessarily. As this thesis aims to examine the effects of employment policies on LPs’ sustainable livelihoods, the employment-related evaluation system of sustainable livelihoods discussed above is used to test the four categories of policies (Table 3). To make the table explicit and the comparison clear, a score of 1 is assigned to an indicator if the policy fulfills the indicator. Then, the total score of each indicator is counted at the end. Zero scores, which indicate that no policy has fulfilled the indicator, are marked as orange in the table.

Table 3. Policy Design Evaluation Using the Employment-Related Evaluation Framework of Sustainable Livelihoods

Indicator of Sustainable Livelihoods Employment Policy	Material						Non-Material				Total Score
	Income		Occupation		Profitable Real Estate		Education		Inclusion Level		
	Amount	Stability	Type	Time/Schedule	Use Right	Quality/Quantity	Knowledge	Psychology	Social Network	Lifestyle	
Creating job opportunities	✓		✓						✓		3
Distributing storefronts	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓					5
Providing money compensation	✓										1
Providing employment training courses	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓		5
Total Score	4	1	3	1	0	1	1	1	2	0	-

Source: Designed by author

Table 3 shows several problems of existing policy designation. First, let’s look at the four policy categories. Under my evaluation, “creating job opportunities” (a score of 3) and “providing monetary compensation” (a score of 1) receive low scores, which implies that

they are designed in a manner that makes them less useful for achieving sustainable livelihoods compared with the other two policy categories; namely, “distributing storefronts” (a score of 5) and “providing employment training courses” (a score of 5). The reason for this result is shown in Table 2. For “creating job opportunities,” the policy does not define specific actions required for the government; no hard number or precise behavior is indicated. Accordingly, at the community level, measures are presented as obligations rather than responsibilities. For “providing monetary compensation,” money is provided monthly, and LPs can possibly do with it anything they like. Additionally, 180 yuan (28 dollars) or 380 yuan (59 dollars) is not a large sum at Zhengzhou’s consumption level; two middle-class company staff can easily spend 200 yuan (31 dollars) on dinner.

Secondly, there are fewer checkmarks in the non-material aspect of LPs’ sustainable livelihoods than in those for in the material aspect. This result is understandable because, under current conditions, the Chinese government would require considerable energy and money to focus more on the psychological problems of LPs; providing them sufficient living materials is still the priority of the government. Thirdly, all four policy categories focus on ensuring a certain amount of income and offering specific types of jobs for LPs, but they pay only minimal attention to job stability, times, and schedules. The reason for this situation may also be the financial and energy constraints of the

government. Fourthly, the indicators “right to use” and “lifestyle” both obtain zero scores, thereby indicating the total absence of consideration of these two aspects. Specific areas of the business storefront are given to individual LPs as profitable real estate, but the policy does not specify who will have the final right to use of the areas; this condition opens the door for grassroots corruption. Furthermore, there is at present no policy in existence designed to directly help LPs change their lifestyle.

5.2 Policy Implementation

As discussed above, the evaluation of policy designations reveals many problems. Then how about policy implementation? To thoroughly understand the effects of policy implementation in Zhengdong New Area, a series of semi-structured interviews was conducted among LPs and government officials in Zhengdong New Area (The interview protocols are listed in both Chinese and English in the Appendix). The semi-structured interviews, in fact, were all tailored largely based on different interviewees. A total of 10 LPs, whose ages ranged from the 20 to 70 years, were interviewed. Seven out of the ten respondents were employed. Two government officials, and both of whom have served for more than a decade, were interviewed. On the basis of the answers of my LP respondents, Table 3 was recreated as Table 4. The six checkmarks that are missing in Table 4 when compared with Table 3 indicate that promises to the LPs in policies have not been entirely fulfilled in practice. I will expand my analysis on the perspective of the

four policy categories in the following paragraphs.

Table 4. Policy Implementation Evaluation using the Employment-Related Evaluation Framework of Sustainable Livelihoods on the Basis of the Interview Results

Indicator of Sustainable Livelihoods	Material						Non-Material				Total Score
	Income		Occupation		Profitable Real Estate		Education		Inclusion Level		
	Amount	Stability	Type	Time/Schedule	Use Right	Quality/Quantity	Knowledge	Psychology	Social Network	Lifestyle	
Employment Policy											
Creating job opportunities	Did Not Fulfill		Did Not Fulfill						Did Not Fulfill		0
Distributing storefronts	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓					5
Providing money compensation	Did Not Fulfill										0
Providing employment training courses	✓		✓				✓	Did Not Fulfill	Did Not Fulfill		3
Total Score	2	1	2	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	-

Source: Designed by author

5.2.1 Creating job opportunities

The policy indicates that the government has the responsibility to guide LPs to make full use of the resettlement land and to broaden employment channels, but none of the LP interviewees mentioned that the government had created job opportunities for them. Specifically, Ms. A, B, and C and Mr. D, whose community is under the control of the Longhu Office, said that they had never attended a job fair or received any job information from the government, although the Longhu Office claimed they had implemented corresponding measures. On the other hand, according to the two government officials who were interviewed, the Longhu Office held job fairs both in 2014 and 2015; in total, 31 LPs signed a hiring agreement with employers. The problem here is

that the total population served by the Longhu Office is roughly 15,500. Thus, only 0.2% of LPs enjoyed the benefit of this policy; this low percentage could be the reason for the 10 respondents' lack of awareness. In other words, the implementation of the "creating job opportunities" strategy has failed. To most LPs, the policy provides neither money, nor job opportunities, nor social networks.

5.2.2 Distributing storefronts

In the policy design, certain storefront areas are required to be distributed to every LP. In reality, the situation of business area distribution is also not encouraging. According to my research, distributing business areas per capita is the most controversial policy category in Zhengdong New Area. The following three scenarios occur in the four communities in which I conducted interviews, because of the large flexibility on the community level in terms of how the policy is implemented:

1. The village committee gathers all the storefront areas and lets individuals or companies run the businesses in these areas. The money earned is distributed to LPs monthly.
2. The village committee gathers all the storefront areas to be run by individuals or companies, but LPs do not receive any money.
3. No business storefront area is distributed at all.

There are stories shared secretly with regard to these differences. Mr. H runs a small

lingerie shop in one community with his wife. He is not a local, but he rents the store from one of the locals. *“I heard that the storefront areas of this community were gathered from everyone but were only assigned to LPs who have guanxi¹¹ with officials,”*¹² Mr. H said. *“I think other LPs also know about this but they cannot do anything.”*¹³ Another LP respondent in another community, Ms. J, is a middle-aged woman who runs a small restaurant outside of one of the communities where interviews were conducted. *“I pay tens of thousands of dollars in rent to the community office every year to own this store,”*¹⁴ Ms. J said. *“The storefront area is owned by the community office, and I guess the community office obtained the area from individuals in the community.”*¹⁵ When asked how she obtained the store in the first place, she did not reply. After walking through the gate of this community, the LP respondents reported that they had obtained no money from their business areas at all; the rent paid by Ms. J quietly disappeared into the system.

From my point of view, “distributing storefronts” is the most crucial policy category in Zhengdong New Area. It gives LPs, who have lost their cultivated land, the right to certain real estate. That is, given that LPs are used to depend on their land to make a living, owning profitable real estate makes them feel more secure. It also makes LPs feel

¹¹“‘Guanxi’ literally means ‘relationships’, stands for any type of relationship. In the Chinese business world, however, it is also understood as the network of relationships among various parties that cooperate together and support one another.” (Los Angeles Chinese Learning Center)

¹² Mr. H, male, in his 30s, small business owner, December 23, 2015

¹³ Mr. H, male, in his 30s, small business owner, December 23, 2015

¹⁴ Ms. J, female, in her 40s, small business owner, December 25, 2015

¹⁵ Ms. J, female, in her 40s, small business owner, December 25, 2015

more confident about their new urban lifestyle. This confidence, although hardly noticed by many people, can be a crucial part of LPs' sustainable livelihoods for many years after the resettlement process.



Figure 7. Storefronts of Resettlement Communities

Source: Photo by author

5.2.3 Providing monetary compensation

The policy promises monetary compensation as hard numbers. According to the LP respondents, they think they do not receive sufficient or receive no monetary compensation at all. Thus, they have to find a job after their land has been taken away to make a living. Mr. F, a local courier, said, *“The government has mandatorily used employment subsidies for the basic old-aged insurance, so I get no monetary compensation in my pocket. You know, I get the point that insurance is good for the future, but I’d rather have the cash.”*¹⁶ He is partially correct. Based on my research, employment financial aid in Zhengdong New Area is mainly given out in combination with a living allowance. In most cases, the money is utilized directly to offset insurance investments at the community level. The government wants every LP to be covered under the basic the basic old-aged insurance, which includes the medical insurance and pension insurance, similar to all urban citizens. Mr. N, who is a government official, told me his surprising yet thought-provoking opinion on LPs’ dissatisfaction. He said, *“I think the government has token too many responsibilities over LPs.”*¹⁷ Mr. N also claimed, *“The government has given too much to make LPs not motivated in their own lives.”*¹⁸ He further used the Chinese saying *“Xiao Fu Ji An”* to describe the status of LPs, which means people can be satisfied with a little wealth, such as money and housing

¹⁶ Mr. F, male, in his 20s, courier, December 23, 2015

¹⁷ Mr. N, male, in his 40s, civil servant, December 30, 2015

¹⁸ Mr. N, male, in his 40s, civil servant, December 30, 2015

compensation, and stop striving for a better life or even complaining that the government is not giving them much more. As revealed by the interviews in Zhengdong New Area, it is true that in some resettlement communities, young children of LPs often stay at home and play games instead of going out to find a job after finishing school because they have a free house to live in and possibly extra housing areas to lease out for money. However, most LPs, especially the middle-aged ones, still aim to work to make a living. When asking about the current income amount compared to the time with land, Ms. A, a sanitation worker, said, “I could only make about 1000 yuan (15 dollars) a month before the resettlement, and now I have 3000 yuan (463 dollars). So I do have a higher income. However, we ate vegetables growing on our land at that time, and now we have to buy everything. Things are expensive; you know, even a green onion can cost you 2 yuan (0.3 dollars).”¹⁹ According to my research, LPs had different income levels and different areas of housing before they lost their land. Most LPs have a higher income and live in a better environment since the resettlement, as the government promised. On the other hand, generally LPs also have a greater living pressure; LPs often struggle to adjust to their new lives in the city, as well as to make money at their new jobs.

Returning to the issue of monetary compensation, on the one hand, providing such

¹⁹ Ms. A, female, in her 50s, sanitation worker, December 23, 2015

compensation is a well-intentioned act by the government because LPs are not likely to spend money on buying insurance for themselves owing to their educational limitations. Insurance would be good for them in the long run. On the other hand, the start-up money aimed at helping LPs obtain jobs loses its initial meaning in this process, and many LPs exhibit psychological resistance toward government intervention; this behavior also relates to the next issue I will discuss: the psychological education of LPs, namely, an education for changing how LPs think about employment in the city. A large part of LP population fear or resist working in an urban environment, since in most cases they have to work in low-level service sector positions such as cleaners and porters. LPs do not feel happy serving the original urban citizens.

5.2.4 Providing employment training courses

In the policy design part, we have talked about various kinds of training courses provided by the government. What are the actual implementation results? Interviews show that employment training courses neglect the psychological education part of LPs as promised. Ms. C, who is an office cleaner, shared her experience in participating in one of the free cleaning training courses provided by the local government. *“The length of the training course was a month, but I do not think there was much to learn about cleaning. The reason was that trainers wanted to get more money from the*

*government by extending the course since the courses are paid by number of days.*²⁰

Ms. C added, *“I left on the second day.”*²¹ One of her neighbors standing next to her during the interview claimed that he did not even attend that course, but he has the same job now. Another respondent, Ms. I, was running a temporary small store in the community when I conducted the interview. She had not heard about the employment training course at all. She said, *“I run this store to make a living. I earn at most 2000 yuan a month.”*²²

Interestingly, not to mention educating social network and psychology, the implementation of training courses itself has potential problems. However, when I asked what policies or measures are the most successful, the two government officials I interviewed, Mr. M and Mr. N, reflected that: *“the training courses are highly fruitful.”*²³ The large gap in opinion as to the effectiveness between policy implementers and LPs is mainly due to the fact the policy covers too few LPs to make a difference. Lack of appropriate supervision may also be a factor, and some people (e.g., greedy trainers) make the situation worse.

*“Not only do LPs need psychological education; grassroots officials also need it,”*²⁴ Mr. N claimed. *“I have seen some corruption down there. Grassroots officials should care*

²⁰ Ms. C, female, in her 40s, office cleaner, December 23, 2015

²¹ Ms. C, female, in her 40s, office cleaner, December 23, 2015

²² Ms. I, female, in her 40s, small business owner, December 25, 2015. 2000 yuan = 309 dollars

²³ Mr. M, male, in his 30s, civil servant, December 29, 2015. Mr. N, male, in his 40s, civil servant, December 30, 2015

²⁴ Mr. N, male, in his 40s, civil servant, December 30, 2015

about LPs more, and LPs should learn to have a long-term development view. Then problems will all be solved."²⁵ I used to think many of the problems involved in the transition from peasants to LPs were due to the over-rapid character of urban development. This government official, however, believed that officials, especially at the local level, are partly to blame, because they are too anxious in rushing towards the "ideal" endpoint of the area's urbanization.

5.2.5 Other factors

The interviews revealed that an unstable income and an irregular working schedule are two highlighted employment issues that are missing in the policy design. LPs generally do not have a high level of education, and they experience difficulty finding good jobs that are stable, have regular schedules, and pay well enough to live in a city. Yang and Wang (10) mentioned that many LPs engage in tough, low-technology, low-income jobs, and many of them work in low-level service sector jobs. LPs in Zhengdong New Area are no exceptions. The occupations of the seven employed interviewees include sanitation worker, office cleaner, delivery man and small business owner, most of which are low-income jobs without long-term stability. The interviewees mentioned that they tend to change jobs often. Also, the working schedule of occupations such as sanitation worker and office cleaner is different from that of the common working group. Mr. E had

²⁵ Mr. N, male, in his 40s, civil servant, December 30, 2015

retired and was raising his grandchild together with his wife. When I asked about the occupation of Mr. E's children, he pointed to the many small food carts parked in the community and said, "My daughter is making pancakes at the front door of our community. You must have passed her when you came in."²⁶ The younger generation in resettlement communities commonly has no time to raise their own children. Therefore, grandfathers or grandmothers can be seen walking around in the community with a little child. Unstable income and irregular working time have pushed LPs farther away from a normal urban life and have widened the gap between regular citizens and LPs. This situation does not bode well for LPs' sustainable livelihoods.



Figure 8. Small Food Carts inside Resettlement Communities

Source: Photo by author

²⁶ Mr. E, male, in his 50s, no occupation, December 23, 2015

6. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This thesis only includes one case study due to the author's time constraint. Although the selected case, Zhengdong New Area, is one of the typical New Areas in China with a moderate size and a widespread reputation, the policies, employment situation and sustainable livelihoods of landless peasants in different cities and countries can be distinct. The research results of this thesis are supposed to have certain significance in helping with studies in other settings, however, implications may not be totally applicable to other cases.

This thesis is written based on the answers of 12 interviewees, and 12 is not a large sample size. Also, since I randomly selected interview targets in four resettlement communities, the age and occupation type of the LP respondents are largely constrained; many of them are the middle-aged or senior citizens, and several of them are small business owners. Considering the potential bias of the answers, I tried to expand questions to my respondents' relatives and friends when conducting semi-structured interviews.

Since LPs form a politically sensitive group in China, some respondents are hesitant to share information with me although the interviews are anonymous. For government officials, chances are high that their answers are distorted by political pressure.

Building on the findings of this thesis, future research on the sustainable livelihoods of LPs should work to assess more policy documents that are relevant and involve larger samples of interviewees. Using both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods at the same time can help with the depth of the research. For instance, a survey toward LPs with a sample size of 100 will tell more common problems. It will also be significant to collect opinions from other stakeholders such as urban citizens and employers of LPs. Only from the perspective of different people, can we understand the situation better and make better improvements. Moreover, there is no doubt that elaborating on different cases, making connections, and expanding experiences will make the study more valuable.

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Through this research, I find that employment policies have significant effects on landless peasants' sustainable livelihoods from the perspective of both policy design and policy implementation. As a "successful" case in Chinese media of addressing the peasant resettlement issue, Zhengdong New Area still has considerable room for improvements.

Three issues should be given more attention in the policy design process. First, defining specific actions and hard numbers in the policy framework can be helpful in guiding the local governments in their responsibilities. Although a certain amount of flexibility should understandably be granted to the locals, unclear instructions may lead to inefficient measures at the community level in many cases. Secondly, on the premise of assuring the material satisfaction of LPs, policy design should provide more consideration to non-material satisfaction, which includes education of knowledge, psychological education, as well as an increase in inclusion level. For example, more emphasis on job stability and working schedule can elevate LPs' sustainable livelihoods. Lastly, policy design should focus on actual effects rather than on formalities. With regard to the monetary compensation of LPs, I think allotting a limited amount of money for the insurance system is probably acceptable if the government does not have the financial capability to give out much cash. In this manner, LPs can better

understand and possibly avoid dependence on government help.

With regard to policy implementation, improvements on three aspects should be considered. First and most importantly, supervision during the policy implementation process should be strengthened to fight against the corruption problem. Corruption and opportunism are slow poisons; they not only can significantly influence the effect of policy implementation, but also can undermine the government image, causing a distrust relationship between the government and the LPs. One good method would be setting up a legal system protecting LPs' interests. Secondly, policies and measures should try to cover the majority during the implementation process. Through the research I find that some policies and measures only reach a small group of LPs, however, more LPs are supposed to enjoy the same benefits. For instance, in the case of Zhengdong New Area, creating job opportunities and providing training courses are thoughtful as ideas, but they fail as policies because of their small coverage. Thirdly, the government, especially the local government, should work hard to achieve a balance between inadequate regulation and over-regulation. On the one hand, the government cannot ignore the difficulties encountered by LPs in the urbanization process. On the other hand, placing too many restrictions on LPs or giving too many benefits to LPs are all unwisely behaviors. A successful policy implementation body is supposed to fully mobilize LPs' enthusiasm without arousing LPs' psychological resistance.

8. CONCLUSIONS

Urbanization in China still has a long way to go. Among numerous groups involved in the process, LPs, with their large numbers and intrinsic disadvantages, are among the more vulnerable groups in Chinese society. Through the case study in Zhengdong New Area, this thesis has looked specifically into employment policies and their impacts on LPs' sustainable livelihoods in China. Data were collected from policy studies, semi-structured interviews, and observations during site visits. I found that employment policies have significant effects on LPs' sustainable livelihoods, and have made suggestions for improvements from a planner's perspective. In terms of the policy design, current policies for creating job opportunities and providing monetary compensation are not very helpful to establish sustainable livelihoods of LPs. I propose to define specific actions and hard numbers, to give more considerations to LPs' non-material satisfaction, and to focus on the actual effects of policies. In terms of the policy implementation, all the four policy categories discussed in this thesis leave considerable room for improvements. I suggest strengthening supervisions, trying to cover the majority, and to achieve a balance between inadequate regulation and over-regulation.

I believe that any specific case can and will reflect its larger societal background. The reasons for many policy failures discussed in this thesis are deeply rooted in China's

national condition. For example, Chinese government lacks experience in dealing with large numbers of LPs coming out of the rapid urbanization process. China, whose government holds a lot of power, still remains at the scrabble stage of the exploration of relating policy design and implication. In 2008, Datong, a prefecture-level city in northern Shanxi Province, China, started its reconstruction of the old city, seeking a development solution for its future. A large-scale demolition within the city boundary happened under the policy guidance. Residences were forced to move out of the old city with low compensation standard, and the government does not have enough money or energy to take a good care of the relocated residences (Shi and Yang). This example shows both the advantage and disadvantage of policies in China; the government can use policies to accomplish ambitious projects, but the interest of people may largely be ignored in the process.

Governments should take the responsibility to help with the transaction from LPs to urban citizens. Focusing especially on the employment issue can be an efficient way to deal with the problems in this process, because the sufficient income is the foundation of LPs' livelihood in the long run. Appropriate and effective policies are useful tools to help with LPs' sustainable livelihoods. It's crucial for China to learn from successful cases at home and abroad. From another perspective, although the situation in Zhengdong New Area has its own particularity, the experiences are certainly well-worth

knowing for other cities and countries when addressing LP issues. The employment policies for LPs in Zhengdong New Area are innovative and advanced comparing with many other places in China. Globally, developing countries such as India and Brazil are also facing problems with the sustainable livelihoods of LPs in their process of urbanization. The policy implementations presented in this thesis highlight the complexity of sustainable livelihood studies of LPs, and identify the issues that can be further studied in the future.

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APPENDIX

List of Interviews

Table 5. List of Interviews

Title	No.	Date	Interviewee	Gender	Age	Occupation	Community
Landless Peasants	1	23-Dec-15	Ms. A	Female	50s	Sanitation Worker	No.2 Zhacheng Community
	2	23-Dec-15	Ms. B	Female	60s	None	
	3	23-Dec-15	Ms. C	Female	40s	Office Cleaner	
	4	23-Dec-15	Mr. D	Male	60s	None	
	5	23-Dec-15	Mr. E	Male	50s	None	Longgang New Town Jiagang Community
	6	23-Dec-15	Mr. F	Male	20s	Courier	
	7	23-Dec-15	Ms G	Female	70s	None	
	8	23-Dec-15	Mr. H	Male	30s	Small Business Owner	Miaozhang Community
	9	25-Dec-15	Ms. I	Female	40s	Small Business Owner	
	10	25-Dec-15	Ms. J	Female	40s	Small Business Owner	No.8 Jinzhuang Dongba Community
Government Officials	11	29-Dec-15	Mr. M	Male	30s	Civil Servant	-
	12	30-Dec-15	Mr. N	Male	40s	Civil Servant	

Source: The author

Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol to Landless Peasants (English)

Hello, I'm a student, and I am a native of Zhengzhou. I'm now studying the impact of employment policies on landless peasants. Since you are one of the affected peasants during the development of Zhengdong New Area, Your experience and opinion will be extremely helpful and meaningful to me. I'd like to ask you some questions. This is an anonymous interview which will only take a few minutes, and any information that relates to your privacy will be fully and strictly confidential. Thank you for your agreeing to participate.

1) How old are you? How are you feeling today?

2) Do you have a job now? Tell me your employment status after the resettlement. Can you describe your job? How long have you been at your current position? How did you get your job? How much money can you make a month? How do you like your job?

3) Tell me your feelings about the employment guidance provided by the community or the government. Are they helpful to you? As you can remember, which one do you think is most helpful? Why?

4) Do you expect more support from the government for the employment issue? Tell me your expectations in detail.

5) How do you evaluate the life now, better, worse, or hard to say, comparing to the times when you have some arable land? Does your employment status now play a large role in your evaluation?

6) I know you have been granted an urban *hukou* along the resettlement, do you feel like an urban citizen of Zhengzhou now? Does your employment status now play a large role in your evaluation?

Thank you for your support and cooperation. Here is my name card, please feel free to contact me if you want to do more talking. Can I visit you again in the future? Is there anyone else you in your mind I can talk with? Thank you.

采访草案：失地农民（中文）

您好！我是一名学生。我是郑州人。目前我正在研究再就业政策对失地农民的影响。我知道您的生活在郑东新区建设过程中受到了巨大影响，我对您的故事和观点非常感兴趣，所以想问您几个问题。整个过程不会占用您太多时间，并且是不记名采访，您的隐私将会被严格保密。谢谢您的合作。

1) 您多大了？今天感觉怎么样？

2) 现在有工作吗？能形容一下您现在的工作吗？您干这个工作多久了？您是如何得到这个工作的？一个月能挣多少钱？您喜欢这个工作吗？

3) 您对社区或者政府提供的再就业指导怎么看？您觉得有用吗？据您回忆，哪一项措施

是最有用的？为什么？

4) 您期待来自政府的更多的再就业帮助吗？具体需要什么帮助呢？

5) 与之前有耕地的时候相比，您如何评价现在的生活，好，不好，还是难说？这个评价在很大程度上跟您现在的工作挂钩吗？

6) 我知道你们在搬迁过程中获得了城市户口。您现在感觉自己像一个城市人吗？这个感觉在很大程度上跟您现在的工作挂钩吗？

感谢您的宝贵时间。这是我的名片。您可以在需要的时候随时联系我。以后我还可以再拜访您吗？您方便介绍其他您认为合适的受访者给我吗？谢谢。

Interview Protocol to Government Officials (English)

Hello, I'm a graduate student from in the City of New York. I am a native of Zhengzhou. Currently, I'm working on my thesis about employment policy and its impacts on sustainable livelihoods of landless peasants. I'm taking Zhengdong New Area as a case study. I have identified you as someone who has a great deal to share information relating to employment policies. I'd like to ask you some questions. This is an anonymous interview which will only take a few minutes, and any information that relates to your privacy will be fully and strictly confidential. Thank you for your agreeing to participate.

1) How long have been in your present position?

2) Tell me your feelings about the on-going policies aiming to help resettled landless peasants. What are the specific steps to help them get jobs? Which policy do you think is the most helpful? Is there a large policy difference between different residential communities?

3) About policy A, how do you evaluate it? What do think in terms of the expected results versus actual effects?

4) What do you think are the impacts of employment policy on sustainable livelihoods of landless peasants?

4) What do you think the government role should be in helping with landless peasants' sustainable livelihoods?

Thank you for your support and cooperation. Here is my name card, please feel free to contact me if you want to do more talking. Is it possible that you can refer me to another informant? Can I visit you again or email you in the future? Thank you.

采访草案：政府官员（中文）

您好！我是一名来自美国哥伦比亚大学的研究生。我是郑州人。目前我正在为我的硕士毕业论文采集资料，论文题目是《中国再就业政策及可持续民生展望：以郑东新区为例》。我认为您在该方面具有丰富的经验，所以想问您几个问题。整个过程不会占用您太多时间，并且是不记名采访，您的隐私将会被严格保密。谢谢您的合作。

- 1) 您在这个职位上任职多久了?
- 2) 请说说您对现行的郑东新区帮助失地农民再就业政策的看法。有哪些具体步骤呢? 您认为哪一项政府最有效果? 根据安置点的不同, 这些政策有很大的出入吗?
- 3) 关于政策 A, 关于您是怎么看的? 您觉得实际实施效果和预期有何出入?
- 4) 您认为再就业政策对提高农民的民生保障起到怎样的影响?
- 5) 您认为政府在帮助提高农民的民生保障上应该扮演怎样的角色?

谢谢您的宝贵时间。这是我的名片。您可以在需要的时候随时联系我。您方便介绍其他您认为合适的受访者给我吗? 以后我还可以再拜访您, 或者给您发邮件吗? 谢谢。