

## 6 Make It Work Locally: Local Models, Global Solutions

One of the biggest challenges for advocates everywhere is how to scale their advocacy—how to replicate and expand success achieved in a single local situation into something that can work in other contexts. In East Asia in particular, scholars have regularly asserted that advocates tend to focus on only their local issues and fail to transform local advocacy success into national or international advocacy success, resulting in a stay-local phenomenon that has been crippling to the expansion and development of civil society and advocacy in the region.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter takes a different view, asserting that East Asian environmental advocates are regularly able to scale their success. While it may be rare to see some of the types of advocacy scaling found in North America or Europe, such as the transformation of a local advocacy group into a multimillion-dollar, professional nongovernmental organization (NGO), or the growth of a single advocacy event into a nationwide movement that involves hundreds of protests and thousands of participants, we do see local success scaled in East Asia. Advocates who are successful at “making it work locally” are often able to leverage a single local success into something that has a longer-lasting, broader impact. In fact, the research for this volume suggests that “make it work locally” is one of the most effective strategies available to advocates seeking large-scale, long-term change.

The Connected Stakeholder Model helps us understand why and how a “make it work locally” strategy is particularly effective for advocates seeking policy change. In all cases, advocates are able to create and utilize their networks to facilitate the development and dissemination of good policy. This chapter will use one example each from South Korea, Taiwan, China, and Japan to illustrate four different ways that local advocacy success can be scaled.

An examination of the creation and work of the Citizens' Green Seoul Committee will show how community-based organizations focused on neighborhood environmental concerns can institutionalize citizen voices into a city's policymaking processes, and that decision- and policymaking process can then serve as a model for broader policymaking throughout the country. This is an example of success scaled through institutionalization. Advocates took what had been relatively ad hoc arrangements and regularized them, ensuring that their voices would be incorporated into policymaking for years to come and enabling other branches of the government to adapt similar procedures for their own policy areas. To use the language of the Connected Stakeholder Model, formal networks were intentionally created to connect diverse stakeholders, facilitating both the development and the implementation of good environmental policy.

A discussion of the development of Taiwan's anti-naphtha cracker protest movements will explain how a NIMBY (not in my backyard) protest that focused on halting industrial development of a specific site can generate lessons that can be productively utilized by later activists in different localities—success was scaled through incremental innovation. By learning from their predecessors, advocates were able to innovate and grow more sophisticated in their capacity to resist unwanted industrial development. These advocates diversified the kinds of stakeholders who were engaged in their advocacy effort and extended their networks from one town to another until they eventually covered the entire country.

The 26 Degree Campaign in Beijing illustrates how a small coalition of local NGOs was able to leverage its local success into new national policy standards—success was scaled through local-national policy connections. Although the movement was initially intended to address a specific problem in a particular locality—air pollution in Beijing—its success in that one locality served as a kind of pilot for new regulations. When the new regulations were successful locally, it became possible to develop and apply the same rules nationally. Seizing on political opportunities made possible by the upcoming Olympics, activists were able to identify and recruit influential people who served as critical nodes in policymaking networks, facilitating the rapid scaling of the city's successful policy to the national level.

Finally, the KitaQ network shows how a Japan-supported pilot composting project was able to expand not just nationally but internationally—scaling through transnational networking. Japanese environmental advocates

identified a good pilot project in which they could test a new composting technology. When they were able to demonstrate significant municipal solid waste reduction and positive social and health benefits in that first site location, the composting system was copied and implemented elsewhere. The Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), a Japan-based NGO, facilitated the development of an international network of municipalities that could implement the system, spreading the local success internationally.

Since the particulars of what makes an advocacy effort successful are often highly contingent on local factors (e.g., Was the mayor supportive? Was it sunny on the day of the protest?), the emphasis in the discussion of these cases will be not so much on how the advocates achieved local success but rather on how they were able to scale that success. Of particular interest here is how a “make it work locally” advocacy strategy can achieve not just a one-time solution to a local problem but also longer-term solutions in geographically larger and more diverse areas.

### **Citizens’ Green Seoul Committee: Scaling Success through Institutionalization**

The Citizens’ Green Seoul Committee<sup>2</sup> was established by municipal ordinance in 1996 so “Seoul citizens and enterprises [could] together participate in city administration to create a pleasant environment and to contribute to the conservation of global environment.”<sup>3</sup> The committee was an example of a local implementation of Agenda 21, a nonbinding resolution adopted at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio that that commits countries and localities around the world to adopting local regulations, policies, and governance structures to address the impending climate crisis.<sup>4</sup> Set in the context of South Korea’s recent democratization—its democratic constitution had been adopted less than five years earlier, and Seoul’s mayor was elected for the first time just one year earlier—the committee, which included many prominent environmental, feminist, and democracy advocates among its early members, was also viewed as an early attempt to put the democracy and environmental movements’ vision of “participatory governance” into practice.<sup>5</sup>

From its very early days, the committee was established as a collaborative effort that would bring members of the government, business community, and civil society together to co-develop policy. It is co-led by three chairpeople—the mayor, an elected member representing civil society, and

an elected member representing enterprise—and one hundred additional members who consist of ex-officio members (relevant city officials such as the chief officer of the Climate and Environment Headquarters and the director-general of the Water Circulation Safety Bureau) and members commissioned by the mayor for their knowledge and expertise related to the environment (these members are often academics). The one hundred members then serve on one or more of four subcommittees (climate and energy, ecosystems, resource circulation, and environmental health). Meetings of the full committee are called at least twice a year, with agendas and project plans submitted ahead of time for deliberation. Commissioned members serve two-year terms, can serve a maximum of two terms, and are required to recuse themselves if conflicts of interest emerge in the course of their duties.<sup>6</sup> The design of the committee helps ensure that multiple perspectives are included in the policymaking process and requires that those voices change over time, remaining relevant.

One of the committee's earliest projects was the Nam Mountain Restoration Project, which sought to remove a number of apartment buildings built during the Japanese occupation and replace them with a botanical garden and a traditional *hanok* village. This was quickly followed by a series of projects and programs designed to increase the livability of Seoul and engage local residents in their neighborhoods—for example, the Revitalize Our [Neighborhood] Hill campaign, the Great Streets to Walk program, the No-Wall Movement, and the Create a Beautiful City to Walk program.<sup>7</sup>

By 1998 the Citizens' Green Seoul Committee had established branches in each of Seoul's twenty-five administrative districts (these district committees also contained one hundred members each), and each of these district committees was active in gathering citizens, community businesses, and representatives of civil society to design, plan, and (eventually) manage the new community green spaces. As green spaces in neighborhoods were restored, residents as well as city officials began to realize the benefits of co-developing urban policy, and Seoul's participatory governance system as it was worked out in the Citizens' Green Seoul Committee gained legitimacy.<sup>8</sup> Seoul's fundamental governance model began to shift from "government-oriented projects to public-private, partner-oriented projects," a shift that was compatible with new ideas about urban governance and was also fiscally attractive after the Asian financial crisis of 1997 significantly constrained all government budgets in the region.<sup>9</sup>

Mayor Goh Kun, who served as mayor of Seoul from 1988 to 1990 (appointed) and 1998 to 2002 (elected), played an important role in developing and expanding the governance model of the Citizens' Green Seoul Committee. During his early days as mayor, he worked closely with the committee on the Revitalize Our Hill campaign, and over the course of his administration he worked to replicate the committee's successful governance model in other areas of city administration beyond those related to the environment.<sup>10</sup> For example, his Committee for Administrative Reform was formed largely of citizens and was designed to offer guidance to the mayor about city priorities and planning; the Joint-Inspection Team was a public-private group that inspected public works projects to reduce corruption; and the Regulation and Reform Committee offered guidance on which government regulations should be eliminated or revised.<sup>11</sup> These efforts to engage citizens in governance were highly regarded, and Goh served as prime minister under three presidents (Roh Moo-hyun, Kim Dae-jung, and Kim Young-sam) and briefly as interim president (March–May 2004) when Roh was unable to serve.

The current mayor of Seoul, Park Won-soon, has expanded the model even further as he sought to replace an “economy-centered development agenda with a people-centered living welfare agenda.”<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, because of Seoul's large size (twenty-six million people in the greater metropolitan area)<sup>13</sup> and its dominant position in South Korea's government and business, policies made by Seoul mayors affect the whole country. Park's One Less Nuclear Power Plant campaign, launched in 2012, has been actively engaging citizens to participate in a number of energy conservation, energy sharing, and renewable-energy-generation efforts to decrease Seoul's total energy use. The results have been impressive, not only affecting Seoul's energy and climate but also shifting the energy profile of the whole country. The campaign exceeded its energy reduction goals (2.04 tonnes of oil equivalent by June 2014) and reduced its municipal solid waste and air pollution even while generating new jobs and creating more green space.<sup>14</sup> Seoul's success has contributed to the ability of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy to be even more ambitious with its renewable energy goals for the country—it aims for the newest planes to be composed of 35 percent renewables by 2040.<sup>15</sup>

The Citizens' Green Seoul Committee began as many local environmental committees do—as a local effort of the mayor's office to engage the

citizens more in the care of their community. It has been enormously effective in working with a succession of mayors to transform Seoul into one of the world's most sustainable cities.<sup>16</sup> As the current secretary general, Seong Hwan Min, reflected to me in a 2019 interview, "Making something better for twenty-five years is pretty unusual. This kind of collaborative environmental governance isn't common, but it works."

The committee's success did not remain isolated in the policy area of the environment or even in the city of Seoul—it has been able to scale its success through institutionalization. It created and has updated a set of institutionalized governance practices that have outlived the charismatic visionary leaders who originally founded the group. The committee's success in shaping successful environmental policy in ways that have benefited the city and its residents has spread to other policy areas within the city administration, and Seoul's mayor has been disseminating this model internationally as well. In an interview with me in 2019, Park expressed his sense of responsibility for using his experience as Seoul's mayor to disseminate best practices around the world.

We have a great responsibility for the next generation and for the future. We have a responsibility to help the cities around the world because climate change isn't confined to one city, but crosses [national] boundaries. ...

The challenge of climate change is about average citizens because the citizens are feeling the issue directly. It is our mission to solve it for future generations. We [mayors] are closer to the citizens than the central government and have more diverse solutions at our disposal.

We can't do it without the citizens. We asked the citizens to be part of the eco-mileage program, to use public transportation rather than cars. Now, more than two million citizens have participated in eco-mileage. This wonderful outcome can be done [only] by the power of the citizens, not by me.

Park has been active in sharing Seoul's experience with other mayors around the world. In 2015, Seoul hosted ICLEI's World Congress, and Park was elected to serve as the organization's president. He also serves as a leader in the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy. The collaborative governance model of the Citizens' Green Seoul Committee is one of the core features of urban policymaking that Park seeks to disseminate to cities around the world that seek to emulate Seoul's success.

The Citizens' Green Seoul Committee has been able to scale its success by institutionalizing its multistakeholder governance model. It connects diverse stakeholders in a large network of citizens who are working together

to improve the livability of the city. The term limits of committee members mean that people regularly cycle off—thereby extending the network itself, as those rotating off retain personal and professional connections with those remaining on the committee even as they build new connections with others. When some of the former members of the committee gain power and seniority—in civil society, business, and government—they gain access to additional networks, as well as more influence over policymaking in national and even international settings. These connected stakeholders are then able to make and implement policies that improve the environment for everyone.

### **Antipetrochemical Protests in Taiwan: Scaling Success through Incremental Innovation**

As chapter 4 explained, NIMBY protests were the origin of nearly all environmental politics in East Asia. The environment generally did not become a political issue until it had negative consequences for human health and livelihoods—people getting sick and dying, fish and crop yields dropping off. Globally, NIMBY protests are usually short-lived. The cause of a protest is highly local—residents don't want the nuclear power plant, petrochemical company, dam, or other construction—in their own backyard. Eventually, the problem is resolved one way or the other; the power plant, factory, or dam is either built or not built, and with either outcome the protests and advocacy stop.<sup>17</sup> Occasionally, NIMBY protests can generate positive long-term policy changes<sup>18</sup> or grow into larger social movements.<sup>19</sup>

This section describes how a local advocacy effort in Taiwan to halt the construction of a new naphtha-cracker industrial plant (a large, industrial petroleum-processing facility) was able to scale its success through incremental innovation. Advocates who had been successful in one community were able to form an increasingly large and diverse network of advocates who could become reactivated when a new community was threatened with similar development projects. Taiwanese advocates have been able to scale one success into several by connecting newly threatened communities with those that had successfully blocked development, enabling experienced advocates to pass on successful advocacy strategies and empower new advocates to innovate on old strategies to take full advantage of new resources and technologies. As stakeholders in one NIMBY fight are able to

connect with stakeholders involved in similar fights in different parts of the country, the connected stakeholders are able to activate their numerous personal and professional networks, increasing the political pressure on policymakers to make proenvironmental decisions.

Taiwan's petrochemical industry began during the period of Japanese occupation and was targeted by the postwar government as an area for investment to spur rapid industrialization and economic growth.<sup>20</sup> The state-owned China Petroleum Corporation built its first naphtha cracker in 1968, and it constructed three more between 1975 and 1984. The country at the time was under military rule, the population was focused on rapid economic development, and the environmental and health costs of naphtha crackers were not yet widely understood. As a result, these first four industrial complexes faced very little local opposition.<sup>21</sup> By the late 1980s, however, the politics around these large-scale industrial complexes had shifted dramatically. Inspired by protests that came to be called the Lukang Rebellion (discussed in chapter 4), in which local activists successfully blocked DuPont's proposed construction of a titanium dioxide plant near the city of Lukang,<sup>22</sup> and legally empowered when martial law was lifted in 1987, Taiwanese began to resist new naphtha cracker installations whenever they were proposed.

The first sets of anti-naphtha cracker protests occurred in 1987, immediately following the lifting of martial law. That year, Taiwan hit peak economic growth, with its gross domestic product growing more than 15 percent.<sup>23</sup> Formosa Plastics, one of Taiwan's largest petrochemical companies, first applied for government approval for a naphtha cracker project in 1973, eventually winning approval in 1986.<sup>24</sup> Its first choice for a site for the plant was in Yilan County, located on Taiwan's northeastern coast about fifty kilometers from the capital city of Taipei.

While convenient from an operational perspective, the location was hostile politically. The nonpartisan local magistrate (the chief county executive, a position similar to a governor) had formerly worked for Formosa Plastics and was vocal in promoting a proenvironmental political agenda.<sup>25</sup> Local Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) activists linked protection of Yilan's environment with their broader prodemocracy, anticorruption political agenda, supporting local activist groups and working with the magistrate to stage protests in Yilan and also in Taipei.<sup>26</sup> Eventually, Formosa Plastics gave up its efforts to build its sixth naphtha cracker in Yilan, and the victory of



the environmentalists and the opposition party over the large corporation and the conservative Kuomintang (KMT) government contributed to the creation of Yilan's moniker as the "holy land of Taiwan's democracy."<sup>27</sup>

Simultaneous with Yilan's successful effort to block the construction of a naphtha cracker in its backyard, Kaohsiung residents were fighting China Petroleum's efforts to build the fifth naphtha cracker. Kaohsiung City had long been heavily industrialized. The Japanese had built a navy fuel plant there, and it was already home to Taiwan's first and second naphtha crackers, as well as the center of Taiwan's steel and shipbuilding industries. While all of this heavy industry meant that Kaohsiung residents were used to pollution, it also meant that they were paying a heavy and disproportionate cost for Taiwan's economic miracle.

When martial law was lifted in 1987, residents began to protest against the proposed new complex. They blockaded construction sites, had violent clashes with police, allied with the DPP opposition party, and encouraged local Buddhist temples to stage martial arts demonstrations in conjunction with their anti-plant environmental protests. In the end, the KMT-ruled government and China Petroleum were able to offer locals a package of community-based benefits such as subsidized gas, free school lunches, and a promise to relocate the new cracker within twenty-five years. These, combined with intense police crackdowns against protesters, weakened the opposition; construction began in 1990, and the plant went into operation in 1994.<sup>28</sup>

Although the protests against the fifth and sixth naphtha crackers occurred simultaneously with protests against DuPont's plans for a new chemical plant in Lukang, these efforts were not well connected. All three anti-chemical-plant protests took on NIMBY protest characteristics<sup>29</sup> and were largely focused on local personalities, impacts, and dynamics. By 1991 the ruling KMT and industry allies had figured out how to target communities more likely to accept large-scale projects. They proposed gigantic complexes that benefited multiple industries, built on reclaimed land that would not require the sale of farms or other private property, and preemptively offered locals attractive packages of financial and community benefits.<sup>30</sup> Although the Taiwan Environmental Protection Union, Taiwan's leading environmental group, tried to counter these efforts and organize locally, its efforts were too weak and too late.<sup>31</sup> Formosa Plastics was able to site Taiwan's sixth naphtha cracker as part of a gigantic industrial facility in Mailiao, Yunlin County, which now occupies thirty-two square kilometers

and includes fifty-four industrial plants, producing everything from PVC piping to spandex, as well as an oil refinery, a power plant, and a port.<sup>32</sup>

By the late 1990s, however, the dynamics had shifted. Politically, the DPP gained power in 2000 and held it until 2008. As a governing party, the DPP became more probusiness, so advocates began to seek out a broader coalition of supporters and move away from partisan politics.<sup>33</sup> As discussed in chapter 4 the dramatic expansion of the global environmental movement, as well as the development of the internet and social media, greatly enhanced the resources that local environmentalists could enlist in their efforts and made it significantly easier for advocates to find one another, coordinate activities, and activate networks of supporters when new threats arose.

The protests against the eighth naphtha cracker, which began amid the 1999–2000 presidential campaign, illustrate how sophisticated the advocates had become. Academics in particular played important roles as network facilitators, technical experts, and organizational focal points. What looked like a made-to-order opportunity for the KMT vice-presidential candidate to bring a big industrial plant, and its accompanying jobs and income, to his hometown of Chiayi unraveled when the KMT lost the presidential race and control of the Legislative Yuan at the national level, and a DPP candidate won the local magistrate race in 2002.<sup>34</sup> Efforts to site the eighth cracker were shelved for a bit but were revived in 2008 when the KMT regained control of the national government and sought to make a new industrial park in Kuokuang a national investment project.<sup>35</sup>

Activists were ready. Academic advocates, many of whom had been involved in the protests related to earlier crackers, mobilized. Science, technology, and public policy faculty created panels and forums at the annual meetings of their professional associations, presenting papers and other research on the hazards of the plants in which they highlighted the negative health and economic outcomes in communities like Mailiao, which had accepted the sixth naphtha cracker, and juxtaposed those negative outcomes to the vibrant and diverse economy and society in Yilan, which had blocked plant construction.<sup>36</sup> Subsequently, many of these conference papers and presentations were turned into authoritative peer-reviewed research publications, offering strong scientific evidence of harm caused by the crackers. These scientific findings were then further publicized by the press, increasing the pressure on public officials to disallow the project.<sup>37</sup>

Local stakeholders such as farmers and fishers joined with students, medical experts, lawyers, NGO advocates, and religious leaders to oppose construction of the plant. Celebrities, youths, and members of the cultural community joined the advocacy effort as well, creating online memes that went viral, publicizing images of the natural wetlands that would be destroyed by the project, and composing songs like “The Song of the White Dolphin” whose popularity enabled the activists to spread concern about the issue far beyond those living near the proposed development site.<sup>38</sup> The advocates spread a message about the importance of economic diversity and local identity. Tu Wen-ling, a professor of environmental planning at National Chengchi University and longtime environmental advocate, explained to me during a 2019 interview how she talks to residents living in threatened communities:

People make a choice at the beginning. You think it is a choice about economic development, but you will lose your identity and your autonomy for economic development, which will become dominated by the big corporation. Then, you’ll be at their mercy. Instead, if you have a more modest economy, you can promote more diverse forms of economic development. Yilan is a good example. They might not be as rich as [they] may have been with the naphtha cracker, but everyone has their small thing. Their economy and lives aren’t dominated by one industry.

Although Taiwan’s petrochemical industry has an enormous influence on the country’s economy—it accounted for nearly a third of the country’s gross domestic product in 2010<sup>39</sup>—it has not been able to site a new petrochemical complex in more than twenty years, and significant opposition arises even when the industry seeks only to update an existing plant. What began as a small set of NIMBY protests by small groups of residents in dispersed communities has, through incremental innovation, become a large, diverse, geographically extensive network of allies who can mobilize rapidly when threats arise. Furthermore, these advocates are not just limiting themselves to antipetrochemical development; many cross-pollinate with the antinuclear community, which is borrowing and sharing its diversified resistance tactics.<sup>40</sup> Taiwan’s environmental advocates were able to “make it work locally” and then, through incremental adjustments, scale their success not only to other communities on the island but also to other issues where advocates face similar political, commercial, social, and health dynamics.

## 26 Degree Campaign in Beijing: Scaling Success by Seizing a Political Opportunity

In 2000, the then-small community of environmental advocates based in Beijing began a monthly salon to gather informally and discuss environmental issues. During a few of their gatherings, they started to discuss what they could do to raise awareness and improve energy conservation in the city. Many of the advocates had experience living abroad, so they drew on their collective ideas, eventually focusing on the problem of overcooling.<sup>41</sup> As Sheri Liao, founder of Global Village, explained to me in a 2015 interview in Beijing,

I think I got the idea when I was in the US. I would feel very confused because I would go into the supermarket in the summer, and I would have to wear a sweater [because it was so cold]. “This is ridiculous!”

I thought at the time that China would never do that kind of thing, but later I found that China was following the same path. So, I discussed it with some NGO people, and we came up with the idea of twenty-six degrees in summer and twenty in winter.

In the summer of 2004, six NGOs (Global Village of Beijing, World Wildlife Fund in China, the China Association for NGO Cooperation, Friends of Nature, the Institute of Environment and Development, and Green Earth Volunteers) launched the 26 Degree Campaign to urge hotels, office buildings, malls, government offices, embassies, and other public spaces to set their air conditioners to twenty-six degrees Celsius or higher during the summer months to reduce energy consumption.<sup>42</sup> The NGOs partnered with the media to raise awareness of the twenty-six degree goal and pressure large buildings, especially hotels, to raise their indoor summer temperatures to save money, improve health, and lower Beijing’s CO<sub>2</sub> and air pollution.<sup>43</sup>

NGO volunteers went around Beijing with thermometers and measured the indoor temperatures of a wide range of large buildings—including hotels, malls, and government buildings—and worked with journalists to expose how far below twenty-six degrees these large and highly populated spaces were, emphasizing both how much CO<sub>2</sub> and polluting emissions would be saved if the air conditioners were set to a higher base temperature and the negative effect that the frigid air had on the health and comfort of the public. Beijing’s mayor at the time, Wang Qishan (he is now serving as the vice president of the People’s Republic of China), got involved in promoting the

26 Degree Campaign. He sent his deputy mayor, Zhang Mao, to hotels for surprise temperature inspections, drawing attention to the importance of energy conservation and air conditioner settings in the summer as a way to reduce Beijing's terrible air pollution and to mitigate climate change.<sup>44</sup>

The 26 Degree Campaign advocates were quite savvy with their choice of advocacy issue, and they got lucky with their timing. Just a month after they launched the campaign in June, there was a massive heat wave in Beijing that caused brownouts across the city as electricity supplies ran short,<sup>45</sup> further heightening the public's awareness of the connection between air-conditioning use and electricity supplies. Additionally, since the government had made a commitment to hold a "green Olympics," local government officials, as well as the hospitality industry, were particularly attuned to the importance of addressing environmental issues ahead of the 2008 Olympics.

Following up on the summer's 26 Degree Campaign, in November volunteers began distributing "26 degree commitment cards" to office buildings, shopping malls, restaurants, and hotels. Beijing Global Village targeted the eighty Olympic Games service hotels in particular and succeeded in convincing ten of them to commit to keeping the temperature setting of their public spaces to twenty-six degrees or higher.<sup>46</sup>

The next summer, in 2005, the 26 Degree Campaign got a large boost when Premier Wen Jiabao gave a speech entitled "Spurring the Development of a Conservation-Minded Society" in which he declared that all government offices would have their air conditioners set to twenty-six degrees or higher and promoted more casual business attire during the summer, emphasizing that jackets and ties were not required for most government employees during normal business functions. He gave his speech the day before Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro appeared at a press conference wearing a short-sleeved Okinawan shirt to launch Japan's Cool Biz campaign, discussed in chapter 9. Wen would have known about Koizumi's planned announcement, as well as the Cool Biz fashion show planned for the world expo in Tokyo on June 5.

Wen's speech was followed by a notice by the Departmental Affairs Management Bureau of the State Council and the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party that all of their departments must set air conditioners at twenty-six degrees or above. Beijing's municipal government then committed its own office buildings and those of the party to following

the same standard, the mayor sent an open letter to all the corporations in the city urging them to do the same, and several national embassies, government and academic institutes, and other entities also agreed to commit to this standard.<sup>47</sup>

After the official announcements, NGO volunteers entered the public buildings that had committed to the new standard, as well as some that had not, and reported their temperatures, applying pressure to those that were not meeting their commitments. They also urged NGOs outside Beijing to engage in similar actions in their own communities, and fifty-one new non-Beijing NGOs joined the effort.<sup>48</sup>

In the years that followed, the system was expanded and institutionalized, with measurements taken on the same days (July 7 and 23)—volunteers received training on which buildings counted as public spaces that could be accessed and measured, as well as how to take and record the temperature—and much of the effort was coordinated using the social media platform Weibo. By 2012 it involved fifty volunteers in Beijing and had expanded to nine cities. By 2015 volunteers in thirty cities were coordinating over WeChat, and the effort was funded by HSBC as part of a larger project related to low-carbon households.<sup>49</sup>

The 26 Degree Campaign is a particularly successful example of how a “make it work locally” strategy was scaled utilizing local-national policy connections. The fact that the locality where the campaign took place was the capital city and that the capital city was hosting the Olympics were both significant. These two factors meant that the central government was particularly attuned to the events occurring at the municipal level. Additionally, the local advocates were able to leverage good connections with the press to help engage the local government, the national government, and the corporate sector to promote the effort. As will be explored in greater depth in the next chapter, it was also helpful that following the goals of the campaign would also generate positive economic value for companies.

Beijing’s NGO advocates, its proenvironmental government officials, the press, and supportive members of the business community all worked together to achieve local success and enable the campaign’s local recommendation to become national policy. Advocates at all levels and in all sectors were persistent—renewing and expanding the campaign every year until it was nationally successful. Furthermore, they continue to this day in a more organized, institutionalized, and well-funded fashion. Winning

a policy victory does not necessarily ensure long-term behavior change, so advocates frequently need to commit to long-term support for their policy gains to be enduring.

### **KitaQ Composting Network: Scaling Success through Transnational Networking**

A final example of how a “make it work locally” strategy can scale comes from an international collaboration initiated in Japan and spread globally. IGES was established in 1998, with support from the Japanese government, to promote sustainable development around the world. Its mission has been focused on “conducting strategic research on policies and practical measures ... based on a foundation of natural and social scientific research as well as technological research on global environmental issues.”<sup>50</sup> From the beginning, the organization has focused on the Asia-Pacific, “as the region holds more than half of the world’s population and is experiencing rapid economic growth, and thus plays a critical role in the protection of the global environment.”<sup>51</sup>

In 2001 IGES identified solid waste management as a critical issue for improving sustainability in the Asia Pacific<sup>52</sup> and began researching ways that Japan’s success in managing municipal solid waste could be adapted for other Asian contexts.<sup>53</sup> Soon afterward, an opportunity to move forward with a pilot project in Indonesia arose through IGES’s connections with the Kitakyushu city government via IGES’s Kitakyushu office.

In 2001 Surabaya, Indonesia’s fourth-largest city with a population of three million people, faced a solid waste crisis when local resistance forced the closure of one of its largest landfill sites for the city.<sup>54</sup> In order to address this problem, in 2002 the city invited a team of experts from its sister city, Kitakyushu, to come to Surabaya to investigate its municipal solid waste challenges and develop a solution. The investigation revealed that while waste collection in the middle- and high-income areas was sufficient, the poorer areas suffered from inadequate collection.<sup>55</sup> Together the Kitakyushu International Techno-cooperative Association, Puskadota (a local Surabayan NGO), and IGES worked with Takakura Koji, a Japanese scientist, to develop an easy household composting method using fermenting microorganisms that would be fast, clean, and efficient in the Indonesian context. They also developed a collection and distribution system that would engage households while also cleaning and beautifying their neighborhoods.<sup>56</sup>

Through this multiorganizational and multicity collaboration, IGES helped Puskakota establish a model composting facility as a pilot demonstration project, using organic material from vegetable markets and street maintenance activities. In the first year, Puskakota worked with first ten and then ninety households to distribute the special composting baskets designed to enable households to compost their kitchen scraps using the Takakura method. Participating residents would receive the compost basket for free and learn how to use it to generate compost. Additionally, Puskakota would buy finished compost (US\$0.07 per kilogram), allowing participants to supplement their income while improving the hygiene of their household, reducing their solid waste, and generating rich compost for use in their own kitchen gardens.<sup>57</sup>

When the pilot project in Puskakota proved successful, the City of Surabaya expanded the pilot to include more composting centers across the city. The city would buy the composting baskets, helping to support Puskakota's activities, and then Puskakota would give the baskets away to residents who were willing to undergo training and be part of the program. Puskakota and PKK, a local women's group, also trained environmental cadres to work with other NGOs and community groups to distribute the household compost baskets, explain how to use them, and promote not just composting but also the separation of waste and recycling within the household. The environmental cadres also follow up with participants and troubleshoot common problems, so the dropout rate is low.<sup>58</sup>

In the first five years of the program, Surabaya reduced its municipal solid waste by 30 percent (from 1,819 tons per day in 2005 to 1,241 tons per day in 2010), its sixteen composting centers had created seventy-five new jobs for low-income residents, seven thousand tons of compost were produced for use in city parks and roadside stands of trees, and green space in the city had increased by 10 percent.<sup>59</sup> Surabaya's success generated national policy change—community-based composting was added to the Indonesian government's National Solid Waste Management Law in 2008. Surabaya also won many awards for its efforts, including the Adipura Award (Indonesia's clean city award), the 2005 Energy Globe Award (from Austria), the UN-Habitat award for best practices in 2007 and 2008, and Association of Southeast Asian Nations' Environmentally Sustainable City Award in 2011.<sup>60</sup>

With the success of its pilot project in Surabaya, IGES sought to scale its success in several different ways. First, IGES and Kitakyushu expanded and



diversified their collaborations with Surabaya City. What began as a joint project to solve a landfill-overflow problem and develop a better way to manage municipal solid waste grew into joint projects related to water quality management, water purification, clean energy, and public health. Over time the diversity and complexity of their cooperative efforts keep growing; in 2018 IGES signed an academic partnership agreement with PT Sarana Multi Infrastruktur (an Indonesian finance corporation) to work with the Institute Technology Surabaya, among other collaborators, to develop new research on green finance, research related to Sustainable Development Goals, and sustainable infrastructure.<sup>61</sup>

Additionally, IGES facilitated the dissemination of community and household composting as a method to improve urban sustainability in other cities across Southeast Asia. It did this by convening a series of workshops in 2008–2009 that gathered municipal leaders together to explain how the Surabaya model worked. These workshops were held first in Surabaya, and then in Bangkok, Thailand, Bago, the Philippines, and Sibu, Malaysia. At each workshop, municipal officials and NGO representatives would come and learn about Surabaya's model and were invited to apply to the Japan International Cooperation Agency for grant assistance to develop a program in their own city.<sup>62</sup> By 2011 the fifteen cities that were using the method developed in Kitakyushu had formed the KitaQ System Composting Network to share information and facilitate its adaptation in other cities.<sup>63</sup> By 2018, more than thirty cities across the globe had adapted the Takakura Composting Method for their own communities.<sup>64</sup>

Finally, IGES's experience in nurturing the Kitakyushu-Surabaya collaborations has enabled it to promote other, highly sophisticated and diverse collaborations that bring together municipal-level governments, local and international NGOs, international development funding agencies, and local and international corporations to promote a wide variety of sustainability initiatives. For example, in 2012 officials from Hai Phong attended one of the IGES-hosted meetings to disseminate the KitaQ composting system in Siem Reap, Cambodia. At that meeting, which included a diversity of representatives from municipal governments in the region, including Hai Phong, and NGOs such as Clean Air Asia, IGES staff presented information about the Surabaya composting pilot. Hai Phong was already involved in technical cooperation with Kitakyushu, but after 2012 the relationship between the two cities deepened.

Facilitated by IGES, Kitakyushu and Hai Phong expanded their collaborations around water quality and waste water management, as well as capacity development for plant management. In 2014 the two cities signed a sister city agreement and worked with Nippon Steel, Sumikin Engineering, Amita, and NTT Data Institute Management Consulting to develop a low-carbon development plan for Hai Phong City, modeled on the Surabaya example, to turn the city into a green port city.<sup>65</sup> Hai Phong had also become one of seven pilot cities in Clean Air Asia's Cities Clean Air Partnership program, which helped the city develop a wide range of activities related to improving air quality.<sup>66</sup> By 2018 Kitakyushu and Hai Phong were collaborating in a range of policy areas, not just composting but also municipal water and sewage treatment, small-business development, transportation, renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and cultural exchanges. The people and entities involved in the partnerships included private global companies, local companies, city officials, national government officials, funding agency officials, NGO specialists, and academics in both countries.<sup>67</sup>

What started as a small pilot program in a single neighborhood in a single Indonesian city has grown into a new waste management plan for the fourth most populous country in the world, an international network of cities that are reforming their municipal waste management systems, and deepened and expanded city-city collaborations that involve multiple levels of governance, as well as the nonprofit and private sectors, pursuing a diverse range of pro-environmental projects. IGES was able to utilize a "make it work locally" strategy through careful piloting, clear documentation of the successful pilot, facilitation of dissemination opportunities, networking of interested cities and organizations, and nurturing of innovation that resulted in many new spin-off projects and relationships that grew from the initial project.

## Conclusion

Around the world, most environmental advocacy efforts begin when residents mobilize to solve a pressing issue threatening their local community. While this origin story is common, what is much less common is for advocacy that emerged out of a need to solve a particular community's problem to move beyond that particular community. Whether it is a NIMBY protest seeking to halt a development project, citizens seeking redress from a

polluting company, or residents advocating for cleaner and greener public spaces, local advocacy efforts typically stay local and do not scale.

There are many reasons for the parochial nature of most environmental advocacy. Two of the most common and obvious are the following: (1) residents have only so much time and energy, so once their problem is solved, they don't have much interest in trying to reach out to others who are facing similar problems. (2) The factors that led to success in their own context are so particular (e.g., a friendly mayor, a charismatic community leader, timing during an election year) that it becomes difficult to find ways to translate the success found in one community to another.

This chapter has highlighted an example of a “make it work locally” advocacy effort located in each of the four countries of interest. As the cases demonstrated, there is no single strategy that can help advocates turn a community-level success into one that transforms multiple communities. The advocates and projects profiled here used institutionalization, incremental innovation, local-central policy connections, and international networking to scale their success to other communities.

Although the cases do not point toward a single method for scaling “make it work locally” strategies, they do highlight the benefits of this strategy and help explain why it is so effective for advocacy. Across all four cases, we see three aspects of a “make it work locally” strategy that help advocates become successful: providing a proof of concept that inspires others, learning from others, and networking.

Perhaps the single most important element of a “make it work locally” strategy is that it enables advocates to prove that an idea for environmental innovation can work. If the innovation can work in one place, it can inspire others to implement the same policy or project in their own communities. The Citizens' Green Seoul Committee showed how participatory governance can be a productive way to develop urban policy. The successful protests against Taiwan's sixth naphtha cracker demonstrated that citizens can mobilize successfully against large corporations and their political allies. The 26 Degree Campaign in Beijing highlighted the ways that small-scale community activists can come up with a good idea (limit air conditioner use) and convince public officials to turn that idea into policy. Finally, Surabaya's success—technical, political, social, and environmental—with its pilot composting project inspired others to try it in their own cities.

Without examples of success, it becomes difficult to convince others that improvement is possible.

Second, once a concept has been successful in one place, it makes it feasible for others to learn and innovate. Adapting an existing model is much easier than trying to generate a new solution from scratch. Communities that have been inspired to follow the example of those who have succeeded can learn not only from their success but also from their failures. They can avoid pitfalls that the first community fell into. They can modify policies that worked to fit their own circumstances, and the experience of the community that performs the second implementation can then be used to form even more knowledge for subsequent communities. In theory, the accumulated experience of experimentations with similar policies or projects should make it easier and easier for later-implementing communities to replicate the success of their predecessors. All four cases show how learning among advocates and policymakers helped shape subsequent iterations of the strategy, enabling the initial success to be scaled beyond a single community.

Finally, all four examples highlight the importance of networks and networking to advocacy success. As was discussed in chapter 3 fundamental to scaling the success of advocacy is the scaling of advocacy networks. As advocates are able to build and diversify the network of individuals and organizations with which they collaborate, they are able to expand their policy influence. In Seoul, what began as an ad hoc group of environmental and democracy activists became a formal committee integrated into the city government's environmental policy process. This governance model was then deepened when branches were developed in each of Seoul's twenty-five districts. The network was also broadened as the city copied and adapted the success of the Citizens' Green Seoul Committee to other areas of city administration and helped shape the evolution of South Korean citizens' ideas about democracy and how it is practiced in their communities.

In Taiwan, local activists worked to fight industrial development in their community and engaged with academics and other policy professionals to help legitimize their claims. This network of academics and policy professionals was then reengaged as new communities were threatened, and they learned something more about the techniques that worked each time they fought a new NIMBY battle. Their network, which now includes not just academics but also musicians, celebrities, and technology experts, is diverse

and coordinated enough to engage and innovate the moment any new battleground is identified.

Beijing activists were able to leverage the assets of a small number of activists in a small number of largely all-volunteer organizations into a citywide effort by connecting with one another. None of the organizations would have been able to carry on the campaign by themselves, and they certainly could not have facilitated the transformation of their effort's success at the municipal level into national-level policy change without connecting with sympathetic allies in the corporate and governmental sectors.

The most obvious example of how building a network is critical to scaling “make it work locally” success is the KitaQ endeavor, which was able to build a diverse network of local and international actors to disseminate Surabaya’s successful composting program in numerous communities across Southeast Asia and even generate new policy collaborations in the development of a green port city in Hai Phong, Vietnam.

In sum, “make it work locally” is one of the most important foundational strategies for advocates seeking change. By demonstrating that their ideas can generate positive outcomes in a specific place, they can inspire others to copy their example of success. Advocates learn from one another, avoiding the mistakes that others have made and offering new innovations related to their own implementation efforts. The networks that advocates create can further enable them to scale success.

While this chapter has highlighted the techniques that advocates can use to scale local success, perhaps the most important lesson of this entire book is that individuals seeking change should start now and start local. The cases in this chapter, and those presented throughout this book, demonstrate that there is no need for advocates to have a lot of money, professional expertise, political connections, or, really, much of anything except themselves, a bit of energy, a sense of what the problem is, and an idea of how to solve it.

By starting small and starting now, individuals and local groups can begin the process of bringing positive change to their own community. They can talk with their neighbors about the problem, build support for trying a solution, and then work with others to implement that solution. If they are lucky, they’ll be successful and solve the problem. If they are motivated, they might be able to use some of the strategies suggested in this book to scale that success, but even if they don’t do anything to scale

their success, that success still matters—their community will be better off than it was before. Even if their initial attempt fails, advocates will have learned more about the problem they face and the pitfalls of finding and implementing a solution. As a result of their efforts, their community will likely be better educated about the problem, and everyone will be in a better position to develop a new solution that has a better chance at success in the future.

This is a section of [doi:10.7551/mitpress/13475.001.0001](https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/13475.001.0001)

# **Effective Advocacy**

## **Lessons from East Asia's Environmentalists**

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### **Citation:**

*Effective Advocacy: Lessons from East Asia's Environmentalists*

**By: Mary Alice Haddad**

**DOI: 10.7551/mitpress/13475.001.0001**

**ISBN (electronic): 9780262363426**

**Publisher: The MIT Press**

**Published: 2021**

The open access edition of this book was made possible by generous funding and support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and Arcadia – a charitable fund of Lisbet Rausing and Peter Baldwin



**The MIT Press**

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The open access edition of this book was made possible by generous funding from Arcadia—a charitable fund of Lisbet Rausing and Peter Baldwin.



Open access edition funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this book do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.



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HUMANITIES**

The MIT Press would like to thank the anonymous peer reviewers who provided comments on drafts of this book. The generous work of academic experts is essential for establishing the authority and quality of our publications. We acknowledge with gratitude the contributions of these otherwise uncredited readers.

This book was set in Stone Serif and Stone Sans by Westchester Publishing Services.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Haddad, Mary Alice, 1973- author.

Title: Effective advocacy : lessons from East Asia's environmentalists / Mary Alice Haddad.

Description: Cambridge, Massachusetts : The MIT Press, [2021] | Series: American and comparative environmental policy | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020027086 | ISBN 9780262542357 (paperback)

Subjects: LCSH: Environmentalism--East Asia. | Environmental policy--East Asia.

Classification: LCC GE199.E17 H34 2021 | DDC 333.7095--dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2020027086>