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# COMPREHENSIVE RURAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES OF KOREA AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

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## Keywords

ODA, rural development, comprehensive rural development, community development, *Saemaul Undong*, settlement zone development, Korea

## Abstract

This paper analyzes a series of policies and programs for the comprehensive rural development of Korea, and proposes a suitable method for rural development in developing countries. Each policy is described and compared based on the background, implementation methods, progress, performance, implications, etc. This study provides suggestions for developing countries with useful practical tips on eradicating absolute poverty, including appropriate target regions and comprehensive development strategies adoption. This paper provides several policies and project support for rural development in developing countries. However, Korea's successful experience will not produce the same effects on developing countries. Therefore, those suggestions need to be adopted with considerations on specific social, economic contexts of developing countries.

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## I. Introduction

Since mid-2000, Korean ODA has exploded regarding the number of projects and budget, and it is the same in the agriculture and rural development sector. The agricultural and rural development sector has witnessed the increase of ODA budget from 23 million USD to 60 million USD between 2006 and 2011. The proportion of the sector among the total ODA is around six percent in this period. The Korean Ministry of Agriculture has also increased its ODA budget from 0.4 billion KRW in 2006 to 12.8 billion KRW in 2013. Among those, comprehensive rural development has been the most popular area of interest, according to relevant studies (Lee et al. 2012; Heo et al. 2013; Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs 2013).

Comprehensive rural development is a multi-sectoral development not limited to earning of farm and non-farm incomes, but it includes the fulfillment of such basic needs as education, health care, sanitation, transportation, etc. It can be an excellent development strategy for developing countries which encounter development tasks in every field of rural society. Especially, rural development in developing countries is closely related to the purpose of achieving Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) number 1 and 2, so that they have put significant efforts to improve rural conditions. Rural areas include non-farm opportunities of employment and income sources, and social and economic infrastructures, for instance, community centers and transportation, are the basis for social cohesion and effective activities.

Korea has accumulated a variety of experiences in terms of policies for the last fifty years in the agriculture and rural sector, including *Saemaul Undong*. Arguably they can be cases which deserve the attention of developing countries and developmental cooperation studies. What needs to be done is to identify time and space-bound specificity and draw implications from them. Since its emancipation in 1945, Korea had benefitted from world assistance in diverse forms, but it was rare that those assistances were provided for the agricultural and rural development sector, although some concessional loans were used for agricultural projects for water resource development in *Yeongsan River*.

Despite its potential as an epitome of developmental strategy for developing countries, Korean rural policies, in their application, need to be adjusted to the local situations. It is surprising enough, however, that not so many studies have

been devoted to the provision of more detailed application method reflecting diverse national and local conditions. As Korea has adopted different rural development strategies during the past several decades, there are many chances that some of them would be, with some modification, possible candidates for emulation.

This paper has the purpose of suggesting rural development strategies for developing countries under various stages and conditions of transformation. Five strategies are selected from the policies experienced in the past in Korea. They have been the most salient rural development policy programs representing each decade from the 1960s to 2000s. Incidentally, it will help the development cooperation practitioners find out the appropriate tactics when applying Korean development models to partner countries.

In introducing each strategy, background, implementation method, progress, performance, and implications are provided. Also, then they are comparatively analyzed regarding the selection method of appropriate target regions and geographical unit of rural development. The final section of the paper offers implications and suggestions of possible strategies to developing countries, considering their level of income and socio-economic conditions.

## II. Previous literature review

Studies about the Korean development model of rural society in general, and comprehensive or integrated rural development in particular in the field of international development cooperation have started to emerge since the mid-2000s. Although it is partly due to the recent sudden boom of concerns on the *Saemaul Undong*, other Korean development strategies for rural societies have also received substantial attentions.

Regarding how to apply Korean strategies to developing regions, Chung et al. (2007) provided 6 agricultural and 4 rural development programs, including food crop production and rural infrastructure building. Each program is specified by offering desirable duration of the project, components of the program, applicable conditions for site selection, and the expected budget. Although authors try to match each program with potentially applicable developing countries by region, policy suggestions based on diagnosis and assessment of the socio-economic situations of particular countries are not provided in the study.

Many researches have focused on the possibility of the *Saemaul Undong* as rural development strategy in developing countries. Sohn and Chang (2011) point out as strengths the self-reliant development, participatory decision-making, and poverty eradication through income increase activities. Some of the components of ODA projects based on the SMU method are successful such as village-level integrated development and leadership training, while the insufficient linkage with other projects, duplicated support, and lack of guideline or standard for leadership education are weak points, according to them.

One of the most comprehensive researches on the *Saemaul Undong*'s applicability was performed by So et al. (2012), and they argue for its special features as a community development paradigm in that it establishes the village as a development unit, transforms the traditional blood-centered social structure into a modern region-based one, and secures core measures for development such as social capital and governance. Particularly, it can be an excellent ODA model as it not only corresponds to the core values of the Paris Declaration but also includes such core elements as governance, social capital and sustainability which are essential for community development. Based on a similar judgment, Lim (2011a; 2011b) suggests building up a brand from the *Saemaul Undong* by extracting its key elements which can be widely applicable.

Besides literature on the *Saemaul Undong* as a rural development model for developing countries, other strategies are discussed by scholars, such as off-farm income enhancement, agricultural technology dissemination, etc. (for example, see Kim and Lee 2015; Heo and Jeong 2014; Koh et al. 2014). Most of the studies, however, do not devote to the point of how to apply or transfer the experiences to the contemporary needy societies.

Still, other studies focus on building up development 'model,' which would play roles of providing basic working principles and methodology by guiding meso- and micro-level local application. Heo et al. (2011; 2012) and Jeong (2010) offer agricultural and rural development models composed of several assistance programs. They name the models as 'Korean ODA Model,' a systematic strategy constituted of various project elements and solutions based on policy experiences of Korea.

As shown above, recent studies about rural development policy as an ODA strategy for developing countries are crowded in the topics of provision of assistance programs, *Saemaul Undong*'s elements for application, and Korean model in the agriculture and rural sector. In fact, Korean policy experiences in the area are

substantially rich, and it needs not stay in the above topics. Through comparison and contrast of those policy experiences, valuable lessons and implications would be derived which are more concrete and appropriate in application for local environments.

Rural development strategies and policies in Korea for the past fifty years have been diverse in their objectives, promotion system, policy targets and beneficiaries, method of scaling up, etc. Particular attentions are worthy of paying to, firstly, whether the projects had been targeted to a specific region or whole nation, and, secondly, what had been the primary geographical unit of development strategy. Of particular interest will be the level of capacity and/or will of the administrative institutions including central and local governments in each period. These are also arguably some of the most crucial issues to consider in constructing development policy scheme during the decision-making process in developing countries.

### III. The Model

Bearing the points in mind, after reviewing selected policy experiences for rural development in Korea, five rural development strategies were selected. They have been discussed as essential policy programs representing each decade, that is, Community Development in the 1960s, *Saemaul Undong* in the 1970s, Comprehensive Rural Area Development in the 1980s, Settlement Zone Development in the 1990s, and Comprehensive Village Development in the 2000s. This paper will compare and contrast them focusing on the method of selecting target regions and geographical unit. From the analysis, more realistic strategic implications and suggestions can be derived for developing countries.

#### 1. Community Development (CD) Project

##### *Background*

Community-based Rural Development (CBRD) is a model which was developed in the 1950s by the United Nations and the International Cooperation Administration (ICA) for the rural development of newly emerging economies which became in-

dependent or liberated after World War II. It was adopted and introduced in South Korea for its rural development, namely the Community Development (CD) project. The CD project was adopted by a proposal in the Macy Report written by the Combined Economic Board (CEB<sup>1</sup>) in 1955 (Yoon et al. 2013: 40).

### *Implementation Method*

The CD project was to organize and enable the residents living in community – spatially in a village – to promote development projects by themselves. People found out development demand latent in the community and further establish specific development plans in collaboration with external advisors to meet such demand. In particular, the CD project utilized the resources that the community had to establish and also, perform important plans and further requests the governmental or external support at a time of insufficient physical (i.e., fund) and human (i.e., experts) resources that such community had suffered from. Planned projects were divided into two: self-help project to be promoted with residents' effort and fund, and subsidized project to be promoted with external subsidies.

### *Progress*

In 1955, the present condition was investigated for 4 villages in Gwangju-gun (districts), Gyeonggi-do (province), based on which the project was commenced in 1958 following a presidential decree. After a few years of shift in primary managing governmental bodies, it was finally integrated into the agricultural extension services under the Rural Development Administration which was newly organized in 1962.

In 1958, 12 villages in 5 *guns* (districts) nationwide were designated as pilot regions followed by the expansion up to 818 villages in 86 *guns* in 1961 (Chung 1999: 2074). In 1965, 33,100 villages (*ri* and *dong*) nationwide were re-organized as 772 self-help regions where a 6-year plan for village self-help based on the residents' demand was established led by rural extension workers dispatched to cities and *guns* (Chung 1999: 2071-2078).

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<sup>1</sup> An economic coordination and advisory body established in South Korea in July 1952 primarily for the purpose of providing economic aid to South Korea and for economic coordination between the country and the Reunification Command (Yoon Seokjin et al. 2013: 40)

The community development committee in the *dos* and *guns* with the governors as its chairperson, under the central community development committee with the minister as its chairperson, took responsibility for the budget and technology support.

Community development agents were selected from those who completed college education (a total of 1,042 agents during the period from 1958 to 1963). Out of those agents, 4 persons were assigned to each *gun* and dispatched to the relevant villages for the purpose of investigating the actual condition of the villages, organizing residents (establishment of development committee), receiving opinions, establishing the development plan, promoting self-help and subsidized projects, and promoting the residents' living conditions (Yoon et al. 2013; Chung 1999: 2074-2075).

Since 1963, the extension service by residing agents was abolished and was converted as extension activities by rural extension advisors dispatched to the agricultural extension office in the cities and *guns*.

### *Performance*

The CD project contained two types: 'self-help' project and 'subsidized' project. A self-help project was a project promoted with the local fund and technology not associated with external support, which included farmland cultivation, construction of village roads and small bridges, installation of small embankment and irrigation facilities, construction of joint-use facilities such as village hall, installation of demonstrative farms to improve agricultural technology, co-production activities, and increased production of compost. A subsidized project was a project promoted by governmental financial support, which was primarily carried out in a variety of projects to develop farming and non-farming incomes, engineering construction, socio-cultural activities, health and hygiene, and improvement of living condition.

A total of 3,395 subsidized projects were carried out while a total 2,951 self-help projects were conducted. Among these, the pilot rural housing project and the methane gas facility distributing project were representative (Ji 2013).

### *Implications*

Community development agents and subsequent rural extension advisors made the round of target villages or resided in such village with residents to take the ini-



tiative in establishing development plan and promoting self-help and subsidized projects (Ji 2013). They routinely contacted village inhabitants of a target village to come up with and plan the project fit for the local condition and demand, and also to carry out subsidized projects following the current policies of the central government.

Therefore, it was different from the method followed by the *Saemaul Undong* movement that commenced in the 1970s, or the subsequent projects and was primarily led by the leadership structure based on village leaders, and village development committee, etc. recruited from relevant residents without any help from external experts and leaders.

Not only agriculture but also a variety of industrial activities, housing improvement, and health and hygiene, and furthermore capability development such as reform of awareness, etc. were included (Ji 2013). The project focused on the development of a space 'rural area' rather than an industrial activity such as agriculture or fisheries, which was considered to suggest a major significance to the promotion method and strategy of the subsequent *Saemaul Undong* movement (Yoon et al. 2013: 22). It was a pilot project targeting the region designated in accordance with a certain requirement. That is, it was being promoted in a way to learn a lesson for the subsequent policy promotion and aim at spreading the resultant performance to another region.

## 2. *Saemaul Undong*

### *Background*

*Saemaul Undong* (hereafter SMU) was implemented owing to the strong will of the government (Chung 1999: 2082-2085). As the national economic growth policies such as the 5-year national economic development plan carried out at the early 1960s focused on the manufacturing industry including import substitution and export drive industrialization, the investment in agriculture and rural villages relatively reduced and accordingly caused a growth gap between urban and rural areas.

At that time, the ruling party pursued a long hold on power taking a variety of political means but they faced political and social objection. They desired to dissolve the anxiety that the public felt and to carry forward the movement by mobilizing residents.

### *Implementation Method*

The most basic geographical unit to implement SMU was a village. *Maul* in Korea has a similar boundary to that of a village. In a *maul*, residents used to be related to each other by blood and there used to be a residents' organization such as *dae-dong gye* to maintain a village society so that it could facilitate decision-making and promotion of joint projects.

SMU was a method with bottom-up and top-down developments combined. The government strongly promoted SMU by systematically forming the SMU promotion organizations, supporting the project. However, the detail of project was usually determined by the villagers' voluntary decision-making process, suggesting that it is adequate to consider the movement was promoted in collaboration of both methods (Park 2007: 5).

SMU was promoted on a comprehensive basis. Comprehensive development is a method to be conducted in a unit region including a variety of sectors such as industry, environment, culture, and welfare: environment improvement project (village rearrangement, improvement of settlement structure), income increasing project, organization project of production base, enlightenment project, and welfare and environment project. Going a step further, it focused on the motivation toward the development based on human resources within region such as residents' organization and cultivation of rural leaders, which was significantly different from CD development.

SMU adopted incentive and benchmarking methods. In the first year when the movement got started, all villages nationwide were provided with the same physical support (i.e., cement) while in the next year. The villages were provided differentially with the support (i.e., cement and steel bar) depending on their level of performance in the first year. Also, all villages were ranked as basic village, self-help village, and self-reliant village inducing mutual competition and benchmarking each other.

Apart from a village chief who was responsible for administration for which he/she was paid, the non-paid voluntary leaders were systematically backed up in the SMU Training Institute to have them be at the head of the actual SMU. Training primarily consisted of the contents which helped them to be confident of village development in the way of mind training; in which the performance of project largely depended on how the leadership consisting of the leaders of village organizations such as women's society and young adult group was dedicated to the movement.

SMU was promoted in a pan-governmental promotion system organized along the central and local governments which were led by the Ministry of Home Affairs thanks to its strong administrative organization. However, it was gradually led together by the other relevant ministries such as the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, cities and provinces, cities and *gun*, and even *eup* and *myeon* in which – privately or publicly – the relevant departments and many promotion councils were organized promoting a variety of rural development projects in many different sectors at the same time nationwide.

### *Progress*

During the period from October 1970 to June 1971, all the villages – a total of 33,267 – nationwide were supplied with 335 sacks of cement per village for free; using which, the villages were directed to select and promote their projects to improve the environment (Chung 1999: 2083). Unlike the CD project, SMU was started and promoted in all rural villages nationwide simultaneously.

The movement consisted of the following promotion organizations: administrative bodies including the central governmental ministries – the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Health and Society, etc. – and the departments related to the SMU in cities and provinces, and cities and *gun* promotion organizations where the public and the private jointly participated: the National Council of *Saemaul Undong* Movement, a pan-governmental body in the central government; the *Saemaul* Movement Council organized in cities and provinces, and cities and *gun*; and the *Eup-myeon Saemaul* Movement Promotion Council organized in *eup* and *myeon* (Lee et al. 2006: 19).

### *Performance*

Until 1982, total investment amounted to KRW 5.3 trillion among which the government bore KRW 2.8 trillion (51%) and residents bore KRW 2.5 trillion (49%) (Chung 1999: 2094).

Developing a variety of income sources caused the reverse income gap between urban and rural areas: farming income improved accounting for an increase from 79% in 1971 to 83% in 1972, 87% in 1973 and 104% in 1974 compared to the household income of urban workers (Yoon et al. 2013: 82-85).

In the case of farming household, however, most of the household mem-

bers injected their labor on an unlimited basis while urban households largely relied on breadwinner's income. Considering this and comparing the real income per capita between rural and urban households, the relative ratio accounted for 57% in 1970, 79% in 1975, and 66% in 1977. Therefore, even in the period when SMU was promoted there was no seeming improvement in the rural economic condition on an epoch-making basis (Hwang 2014: 57).

### *Implications*

SMU conducted in Korea has received a variety of evaluations. The following table describes and arranges what many different researchers pointed out about the 'success' factors of the movement.

Table 1. Success Factors of SMU

Researcher	Success Factor
Ministry of Home Affairs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. National self-awareness of "We can do it"</li> <li>2. Stimulating motivation of "We can make a good living"</li> <li>3. Adoption of a new social education system</li> <li>4. Operation of a contextually-fit support system</li> <li>5. Exercise of tenacious leadership</li> </ol>
Yoo Hoon	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Residents' amicable attitude and cooperation</li> <li>2. Government's support</li> <li>3. <i>Saemaul</i> leaders' efforts</li> </ol>
Lee Jilhyeon & Rosen	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pan-national all-out promotion including the sovereign ruler; all residents' participation; and the projects selected and conducted with residents' voluntary will for development</li> <li>2. <i>Saemaul</i> spirit coming from the national heart, which was embodied in their ordinary lives</li> <li>3. All activities -directly or indirectly- connected to the increase in production and income, conducted for the common profits of community and residents</li> <li>4. Government's preferential support for successful role-model villages, causing development competition</li> <li>5. Long-term due to a stable political leadership</li> </ol>
Hwang Injeong	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organizational strategy of SMU</li> <li>2. Energetic and vigorous political system and government's support</li> <li>3. A variety of social and cultural conditions latent in Korea's rural community</li> </ol>

(continued)

Researcher	Success Factor
National Council of <i>Saemaul Undong</i> Movement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Government's choice to overcome poverty</li> <li>2. National mobilization aiming at balanced development</li> <li>3. Injection of powerful political authority into the national project</li> <li>4. Visible effects triggering national participation</li> <li>5. Progressive development of national awareness</li> </ol>
Jeong Gapjin	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Active participation of the people</li> <li>2. Government's appropriate support</li> <li>3. Use of effective promotion strategies</li> </ol>
Gwak Jong-mu	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establishment of an appropriate goal accepting the people's expectation of overcoming poverty and considering the socioeconomic condition</li> <li>2. Successful operation of the integrated system starting with the environment improvement movement, expecting education by <i>Saemaul</i> educators and the visible performance and, furthermore, increasing farming income where efforts, performance, and rewards were motivated</li> <li>3. Income increase in the agricultural sector forming a successful virtuous-circle economic structure with other manufacturing and service industries</li> <li>4. Successful cultivation of <i>Saemaul</i> leaders as innovation mentors</li> <li>5. President's leadership and constant attention that are relevant to the situation of the period</li> </ol>
Ko Geon	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strategic unit of rural development</li> <li>2. Integrated rural development strategy</li> <li>3. Voluntary participation and democratic decision-making</li> <li>4. <i>Saemaul</i> leader and education</li> <li>5. Catalytic and strategic support</li> </ol>

Source: Heo et al. (2013, 97-98).

SMU is internationally known as a strategy largely contributing to rural development in the course of Korea's development from a developing country to a developed one through rapid economic growth. The number of foreigners who took *Saemaul* training from 1973 to 2011 with the awareness that the movement drove Korea's rural development reached 4,171 persons in 107 countries (So et al. 2012). Vietnam is currently implementing the project named 'The 2011~2020 National Target Program on New Rural Development' for the nationwide rural villages, which seemingly benchmarked the Korea's SMU. However, the case that any developing country explicitly benchmarked SMU and adopted it as its national rural development strategy was nowhere other than in Vietnam until now.

Korea's SMU was a kind of 'political program' and most projects implemented as a part of the movement were those projects conducted by the existing relevant ministry but later promoted with a new name as a part of SMU. Accordingly, the project related to local development implemented by each ministry was integrated into and promoted as SMU. Therefore, the performance of an individual project by each ministry was also recorded in the performance of SMU (Chung 1999: 2098).

SMU adopted a village as a basic geographical unit; afterwards, due to the gradual urbanization in progress and the environmental change in the expansive residents' living area to a relatively bigger rural township than a village (Chung 1999: 2099), the movement was yet to be expanded and promoted as a rural development strategy in the 1980s.

### 3. Comprehensive Rural Area Development and Settlement Zone Development Project

#### *Background*

As the export-oriented industrialization focusing on heavy chemical industry continued, the national economy witnessed reduced importance in agriculture. The income gap between rural and urban households gradually expanded. The necessity to reconsider the unbalanced local development strategies was suggested. Due to the increase in farm household debts and the rapid progress of rural exodus, complaints against the agricultural policy were amplified (Seong et al. 2011).

As shown in the following table, the population in rural area (eup and myeon) tended to decrease; particularly, such a tendency in myeon other than eup which is a small rural town was remarkable during the period from 1985 through 1995.

Table 2. Population Changes in *Eup* and *Myeon*

	1985	1990	1995	2000
Nationwide (A)	40,448	43,411	44,609	46,136
Urban Area	28,506	32,875	35,389	36,778
<i>Eup/myeon</i> (B)	11,943	10,536	9,220	9,358
<i>Eup</i>	3,689	3,523	3,382	3,737
<i>Myeon</i>	8,254	7,012	5,838	5,621
Population Ratio (B/A)	0.295	0.243	0.207	0.203

Source: National Statistical Office (for each year), The Population and Housing Census Report; Requoted from Lee et al. (2006).

The population ratio of those aged 65 or above accounted for 5.6% in the rural area and 2.6% in the urban area in 1980, which was spaced further apart in 1995 accounting for 11.8% and 4.3%, respectively (each year in the National Statistical Office; requoted from Lee et al. 2006). The improvement of agricultural structure put its core values on two goals: the expansion of farming scale targeting family farming households and the development of non-farming income sources and welfare benefits targeting petty small-income farmers.

### *Implementation Method*

As industrialization and urbanization were in progress in the 1980s, the livelihood boundary of rural residents expanded from the village and *myeon* to the gun or even to the adjacent cities. Considering such a phenomenon, a development strategy was introduced targeting areas spatially far expanded.

The comprehensive rural area development was the first development strategy which established the development plan on a systematic and comprehensive basis targeting the unit of gun. This strategy targeted the extensive rural area including the central cities within the unit of gun and any villages located in the adjacent areas on a geographical basis. Also, not only the area targeted in the plan was simply expanded but also the past agricultural policies enforced focusing on the industry – agriculture – was expanded to a broadened concept including agriculture, farmers, and rural villages: i.e., meaning the agricultural policies came to include the policies for rural area.

The project emphasized the general improvement of the local economic, social, and cultural environment, the efficient use of the tangible and intangible resources latent in each region, and the organization of farmers or local residents as a subject of development. Strategically, it also stressed the participation and partnership between the residents and local government and the mutual connection and adjustment between each sector consisting of the comprehensive development thereby achieving synergy effect and further multi-dimensional network cooperation and adjustment (Song 2010).

The settlement zone development project promoted in the 1990s was conducted taking after the comprehensive development method led by the comprehensive rural area development project of the previous period but revealed the following differences. The comprehensive rural area development project was promoted on a plan establishment basis but never underwent the actual support and

investment while the settlement zone development project was implemented based on the applicable statutes. Also, the settlement zone development project designated and was promoted in, target locations focusing on those villages which played a pivotal function in living district such as *myeon* office other than the unit of *gun*.

### *Progress*

#### Comprehensive Rural Area Development (the 1980s)

Fifteen ministries constituted of the Commission on Agriculture and Fisheries Measures including the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Construction, the Ministry of Health and Welfare, and the Ministry of Transportation; by which the comprehensive rural area measures were announced in March 1986. Reflecting local characteristics and residents' opinion, the comprehensive rural area development plan was established in a unit of *gun* including industry in rural villages, improvement of the agricultural structure, and improvement of the living environment.

The regional budgetary system was adopted in which the projects and budgets of the ministries in the central government related to the rural development were put together and organized with those of the local governments in a unit of *gun*. Also, another institutional change was brought in which the method to pay the subsidies targeting farming and fishing areas were transferred and subject to an application (Yoon et al. 2013: 29).

Accordingly, each *gun* established a comprehensive plan on a pilot basis, which included the projects for rural infrastructure development, residents' employment and income activities, evolvement of local industries for local economy revitalization, and local educational, cultural, and medical improvement, etc. During the period from 1986 to 1987, a pilot project – including partial investment – was conducted for 5 *guns*.



Figure 1. Composition of the Comprehensive Rural Area Development Plan

Macro Plan	Population, local economic growth and industrial structure
	Land use
Rural Settlement Plan	Rural center development
	Myeon/village-unit development
Rural Industry & Economy Plan	Development of regional agriculture
	Development of agricultural production infrastructure
	Development of rural industry and non-farming income sources
	Development of rural tourism and service
Rural Society, Culture, and Welfare Plan	Education in rural area
	Human resources development
	Medical treatment in rural area
	Culture in rural area
	Informatization in rural area
	Social welfare in rural area
Rural Landscape and Environment Plan	Rural housing
	Water and sewage in rural area
	Sewage treatment facility in rural area
	Road and transportation in rural area
	Urban-rural exchange
	Rural landscape and environment conservation
Rural Area Development Promotion Plan	Rural area development & investment plan
	Rural area development administration

Source: Lee et al. (2006: 136).

### Settlement Zone Development Project (the 1990s)

The settlement zone development project was a comprehensive rural area development project aiming at enhancing the residents' living quality and the agricultural productivity by improving their poor living and production conditions in farming and fishing villages. Local government led this project with the basic plan and financial support established and provided by the central government. Regarding the connection between small- and mid-sized cities and farming/fishing villages, the region which functioned as a central place within *gun* (i.e., the seat of *gun* (county) office) was supplemented with the social infrastructures such as school, hospital, and road. The rural area of *myeon* witnessed the comprehensive development in-

cluding production and living bases focusing on the village holding good farm lands. This project was divided into: the general settlement zone development project and the cultural village development project (Lee et al. 2006: 23).

### *Performance*

For the first time in Korea's agricultural policies, a comprehensive plan was established including all the projects such as infrastructure development including farm road construction and water resources development i.e., reservoir; promotion of local industries to expand job opportunities for residents and reinvigorate the local economy; and local educational, cultural, and medical improvement to level up the settlement environment. The target areas to establish the plan were expanded from 3 *guns* – Cheongsong, Gangjin, and Gongju – to all *gun* areas.

However, the contemplation that the budget allocation method should be changed including the investment in pilot areas where the development plan had already been established was not actually implemented due to the failure to enact the relevant supporting laws and regulations.

Unlike the comprehensive rural area development project promoted on a pilot basis, investments were actually made in the projects conducted in the 1990s including the settlement zone development project. The years from 1990 to 1995 supported a total of KRW 826.1 billion for the general settlement zone development project and established the *myeon*-unit development plans for 479 locations (62%) among all of 777 locations of *myeon* targeted for the settlement zone development. During the same period, 51 districts were targeted for the culture village development project, to which a total of KRW 172.5 billion was supported.

### *Implications*

The agricultural policy was directed to cover all the following three: the space or 'farming village,' those residing in that space or 'farmer,' and what they do for a living namely 'farming' (Chung 1999: 2068). This project primarily dealt with industrial development and spatial plan, living environment plan, and culture and recreational place development in a unit of city and *gun* on a comprehensive basis. The state governmental departments responsible for rural development and farmers' welfare were newly organized within the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and

Fisheries which had previously administered the agricultural policies from an economic perspective neglecting the territorial aspects.

However, the comprehensive rural area development project fell short of securing a budget because it was an administrative plan and lacked in legal binding authority. The Economic Planning Board desired to change the existing allocation method of the budget; in the meantime, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries intended a separate budget to be allocated apart from the existing budget in order to promote this project, which was a cause of the disagreement between the two bodies. In addition, although the investment budgets for a variety of sectors such as education, medical service, culture, and environment should be allocated under the local initiative, the relevant ministries never intended to transfer their authority to the local government to allocate budget for the project (Lee et al. 2006: 21).

For the settlement zone development project, however, the supplementary budget was available for its implementation. Under the legal ground of the Act on the Special Measures for Development of Agricultural and Fishing Villages in 1990 and the Development of Agricultural and Fishing Villages Act in 1994, a more stable and systematic promotion of the project was guaranteed. Compared to SMU the basic unit of which was a village, the rural development project during this period was conducted in a unit of *gun* (comprehensive rural area development) or *myeon* (general settlement zone; culture village) when establishing a development and investment plan.

However, the comprehensive rural area development project targeting the unit of *gun* failed to receive an actual investment while the settlement zone development project targeting the unit of *myeon* was conducted actually for several villages (Chung 1999: 2069; Lee et al. 2006: 23).

#### 4. Comprehensive Rural Village Development (2000s)

##### *Background*

Going into the 21st century, the problems still remained. The portion of agriculture shrunk in the national economy, farmers' income fell, the population in rural area decreased, and rural areas saw the aging of the rural residents. In the meantime, the recognition on agriculture and rural villages started to change. The necessity to establish a new role for agriculture and rural villages appeared including the emphasis on the functions of the rural villages in terms of public interest such as the

conservation of natural environment and the territorial maintenance; the increase in attention toward food safety; a desire to close the gap between urban and rural welfare; and the increase in national attention to the returning to farming.

According to Seong et al. (2011), the rural policy before the 2000s was regarded as a means of supporting agricultural policy concentrating on the improvement of basic living. In the 2000s, the target of administration expanded toward farming, food, and rural villages, by which the agricultural policy came to recognize rural villages as not just an agricultural production-oriented space but as a multi-dimensional space including production, settlement, and recreation.

The rural development project conducted during the period entering the 21st century put emphasis on welfare, quality of life, and tourism. Rural development came to include not only the improvement of the rural living environment and the increase in non-farming incomes but also an extensive scope that included environment, welfare, and culture. Therefore, the scope of beneficiaries of the development came to include urban dwellers as well as farming people. The local development policy (for example, the establishment of the local innovative system) was introduced using a variety of tangible and intangible resources latent in rural villages (Seong et al. 2011).

The major rural development policies emerging since 2000 included the green village development project, the rural traditional theme village development project, the urban dwellers' rural attraction support project, the rural village development project, the farming/fishing village theme park development project, and the farming/fishing village new-town development project. This research focuses on and describes the comprehensive rural village development project among them.

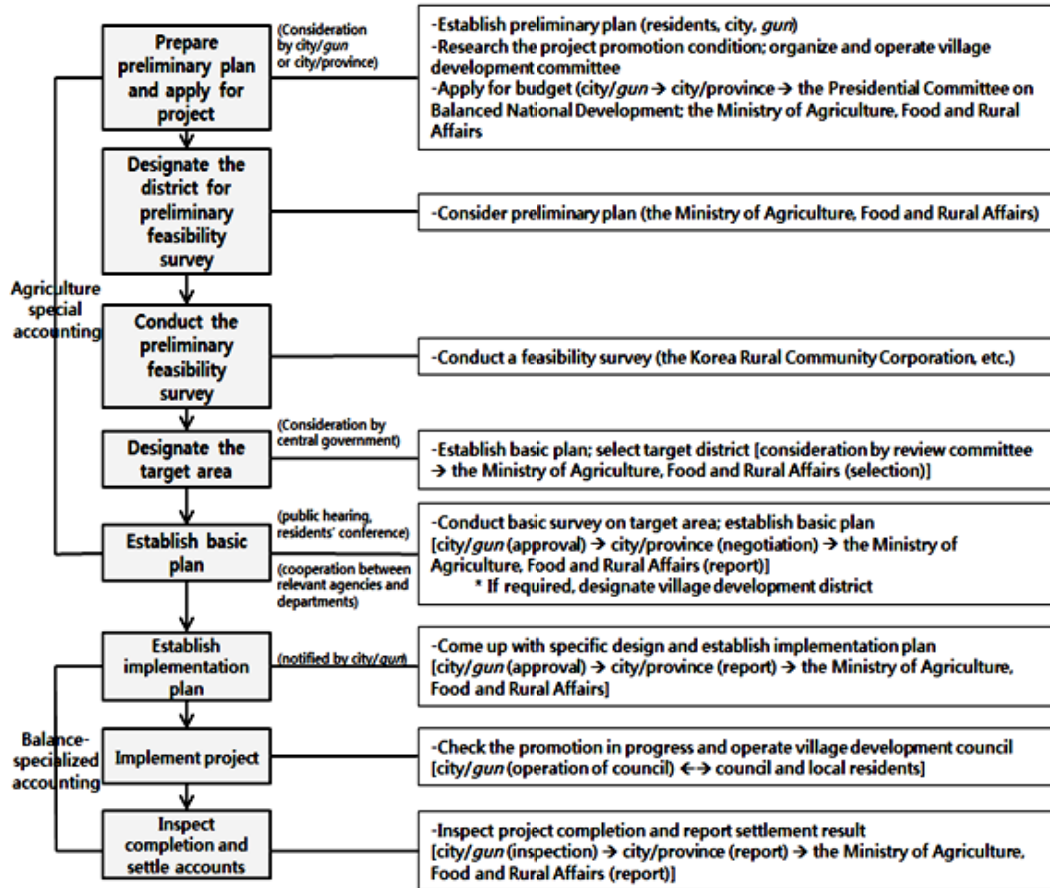
### *Implementation Method*

The comprehensive rural village development project was preferentially developed: in the bottom-up method where the local governments played the trigger role in participation escaping from the central government-led promotion; or in a cooperation between central and local governments (Yoon et al. 2013: 33, 104). In the villages with the developing potential and with the same living and farming boundaries, local residents, local governments, and relevant experts participated in their initiatives.

As shown in the following figure, the comprehensive rural area development project was implemented with a variety of roles assumed by each institution

such as local residents, mayor/*gun* governor, municipal/provincial governor, Korea Rural Community Corporation, and Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries following the project promotion procedures.

Figure 2. Procedures of Comprehensive Rural Area Development



### Progress

The comprehensive rural area development project was to improve the rural landscape, renovate living environment, and secure an income base thereby creating a rural settlement environment where people desire to live and visit, and further inspire local residents with hope and energy and accordingly pursue the maintenance of the rural community (Ji 2012).

The main contents of project were classified into: improving village landscape (small park in village, development of village forest, removal of land and long-time vacant house, etc.); construction of basic living facilities (village road, parking lot, water and sewage system, new construction or renovation of houses, etc.); establishment of income infrastructure (joint seedling, joint storage/collection facilities, etc.); development of village base for (retired) urban dwellers' settlement in rural village (redevelopment and reorganization of village, etc.); and strengthening of village capacity (village planning consulting, PR & marketing, program to attract the population, etc.). Of course, the development model was not in uniform, but various types of development models were applied appropriately for the characteristics of each region using the resources latent in that region. Also, under the principle of choice and concentration, the main development assignment was designated and promoted fit for a unique theme formation in each region.

Project costs (balanced development special accounting) were supported within the scope of KRW 4 to 7 billion (70% from the national treasury; 30% from the local government) for 3 to 5 years for each region depending on the regional size. The cost to establish basic plan was separately earmarked by a local government following the introduction of comprehensive subsidy system, where the construction of common use facilities which unspecified individuals used such as basic living facilities (excl. houses), culture and welfare facilities, etc. was fully subsidized. However, the construction of income infrastructure jointly for village residents (a corporate specialized producers' organization with more than 5 members) was subject to the support under the ratio of subsidy (80%) vs. self-burden (20%). Also, the experience of rural life, tourism infrastructure, and sites were secured and supported by each village.

### *Performance*

The comprehensive rural area development project is being promoted aiming at 400,000 households by 2017. By 2009, the beneficial households which benefited from the project accounted for 22.1%; and the satisfaction level of the residents in that district accounted for 80%.

### *Implications*

The rural area development projects in this period were, in common, targeting vil-

lages (Lee et al. 2004: 55). The village development projects implemented during this period included the projects led by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (environment and agriculture district development, comprehensive village development, green village development, etc.), the Rural Development Administration (traditional theme village cultivation), the Korea Forest Service (comprehensive mountain village development), the Ministry of Government Affairs and Home Affairs (pilot information village), and the Ministry of Environment (superb eco-friendly village).

The amounts of KRW 3.8 billion in minimum and KRW 7.8 billion in maximum were injected, with KRW 6.5 billion on an average intended for each village, among which KRW 4.9 billion – accounting for 90.6% – was assigned to hardware. However, as the project costs were intensively put to the development of income sources – i.e., KRW 3.43 billion which accounted for 70% of the total project costs – the investment in facilities related to the living environment or the software, etc. was relatively small in volume as revealed in an evaluation (Seong et al. 2011).

#### IV. Comparative analysis of Korean comprehensive rural development policy programs

So far this paper reviewed the background, implementation method, progress, and performance, and derived some implications from each development strategy which Korean government introduced since the late 1950s. Below table shows the comparative summary of the key features of the strategies.

A key feature of the CD strategy was the joint efforts by residents and advisors, whereas the SMU regarded leadership as crucial and ‘competition and incentive’ was a principle of mobilization. The Comprehensive Rural Area Development and the Settlement Zone Development strategies contrasted with each other in that one focused on balanced development while the other invested in ‘growth pole’ such as center of *gun*. The Comprehensive Village Development strategy had the target area of a few combined regions.

Table 3. Key Features of Rural Area Development Policy

Strategy	Community Development	SMU	Comprehensive Rural Area Development Project	Settlement Zone Development	Comprehensive Village Development
Feature	Joint efforts by villagers and external extension advisors	Leadership Competition and benchmarking Improvement of the living environment Enlightenment	Balanced growth Subsidization based on application	Central area development Hardware development	Region-level development

### 1. Selection of an Appropriate Target Region for Rural Area Development

In case of Korea's rural area development policy and the international development and cooperation project, the target region has been selected in the following method.

Table 4. Method to Select Target Region for Rural Area Development in Korea

Community Development (CD) Project	SMU	Comprehensive Rural Area Development Project	Settlement Zone Development	Comprehensive Village Development	ODA Project
Pilot project	National project	Pilot project	Application, examination, and selection	Application, examination, and selection	Pilot project

The table shows that the Korea's rural area development policies were promoted in three types: the pilot project in the region selected on a top-down basis; the project in the region selected through the application on a bottom-up basis; and the project conducted nationwide. Judging from that the CD project had a nature as a predecessor of SMU, the Korea's rural area development policies were converted to the support for the pilot regions or the region selected through application from the national application method after SMU (Ji 2013). On the initial stage of the Korea's economic growth, the development program was promoted targeting all the regions to eliminate the absolute poverty through rural area development. As the economy has developed afterward and there occurred a regional development gap between the rural villages adjacent to the metropolitan cities and the mountain-



ous/wild/remote rural villages or island areas, it was needed to adopt the selective development strategy considering such gap.

The development level appears different between regions, and there are a variety of development goals and demands in each region so that it is required to vary the contents of development program. Accordingly, it is needed to differentiate development strategies depending on local condition and development level. Of course, establishing the regional development strategies and introducing development programs requires being connected closely to the national development strategies in line with local resources and strategic significance.

Most of the project-type rural area development ODA projects are likely to be promoted as a pilot project targeting some regions selected following the agreement with the relevant developing country's government. When a developing country implements its rural area development, it needs to determine whether to attempt rural area development nationwide or promote a pilot project considering the budget availability that it can finance on its own in accordance with the level of economic and social development.

The international development and cooperation project used Korea's SMU as a benchmark for the Vietnamese rural area development pilot project (2001~2003). Also, the Vietnamese National Target Program for New Rural Development (2011~2020), which is the first one to promote a rural area development policy benchmarked Korea's *Saemaul Undong* on a nationwide basis (Heo et al. 2013: 107-108).

## 2. Selection of an Appropriate Geographical Unit for Rural Area Development

In general, every place tends to consist of the administrative or economic center covering the village and the farming/fishing hinterland. Korea's rural area development policies have been progressed in various ways regarding its geographical scope, and the project unit. Community Development (CD) and SMU were subject to a unit of village while the comprehensive rural area development in the 1980s was subject to a unit of *gun*, which was followed by the changes in a unit of village again. That is, the development projects have been promoted in two ways: one method to advocate the connected development between the center and the hinterland (comprehensive rural area development; settlement zone development) and the other method to develop the hinterland (community development; SMU; comprehensive village development, etc.).

Table 5. Geographical Unit of Rural Area Development Policy

Community Development (CD) Project	SMU	Comprehensive Rural Area Development	Settlement Zone Development	Comprehensive Village Development
<i>ri</i> (village)	<i>ri</i> (village)	<i>gun</i> (district)	<i>myeon</i> (township)	Multiple <i>ri</i> (village)

Up to the 1970s, Community Development and SMU projects were promoted focusing on a village which was the basic spatial scope of social group. Afterward, as the rapid progress in industrialization and urbanization caused to decrease the population in villages but the infrastructure for moving between regions such as road and transportation have been developed, residents' routine livelihood boundary was expanded to or beyond *myeon* (township). Thus, a rural development project came to be adopted focusing on *myeon* or *gun* (district), a geographical space broader than a village.

After the late 1990s, emphasizing the bottom-up development method – planning and specific project selection through residents' participation – caused to promote the project in a unit of narrowed down to areas consisting of a village or multiple villages where an ordinary communication was available among residents.

A rural area development policy in developing countries or a cooperation project targeting developing countries needs to establish the strategies to select target regions considering the following factors. A unit of rural development should be formed considering the structure of the rural society and the unique agricultural condition in each country. In case of South Korea, the social relationship traditionally bound by blood has existed in a community, which was responsible for taking initiatives in a variety of traditional events such as decision making on the village common assets management and farming activities, mobilization for public work such as road maintenance, and village rituals, using its own autonomous organization such as *Daedong gye*. Likewise, a village as a local community was not much different from the geographical boundary of the administrative districts '*ri* (village)' so that it was characterized that the government policy could be easily promoted in a unit of village which required the collection of residents' opinion and the mobilization of resources.

However, when a society is formed and demographically distributed relying on tribe and ethnicity, a different approach seems to be necessary based on another method.

The following table compares Korea's condition at a time the SMU was conducted and the African condition typically in a state of underdevelopment

today. Although it is inappropriate to think of the African continent as one nation, some elements which are critically differentiated from Korea can be extracted. With many sparsely resided areas, still the continent needs to go further to improve the educational level of the people. Heterogenic ethnicity is usually a center of social and family system with land co-ownership, which is under threat in globalization and industrialization. Poverty level and people employed in traditional agricultural sector are still very high. Korean SMU started with a different socio-economic context; people contacted and routinely communicated in territorially-bound communities. Traditionally, Koreans have laid stress on learning which contributed to the highest level of literacy. The family relationship is strong and, under rapid industrialization and urbanization, they had to transform their world views and quickly adapted to the commercialization of agriculture.

Table 6. The Conditions of African Countries to Apply SMU

Division	Africa	Korea
Internal Condition	Distributed residence Relatively low level of education Collapse of family system Heterogeneity between tribes Land co-ownership Non-organized farmers	Collective residence Relatively high level of education Strong family system, single-race nation Established private land ownership Organized farmers
External Condition	Both industry/urban sectors less developed	Farmers' change of awareness triggered by industrial/ urban development
Timing	Change of awareness needed	Inducement of income and technology to rural areas due to industry/technology advancement

Source: Jeon et al. (2013: 22).

## V. Implications and application for developing countries

The above comparative analysis and consideration about previous Korean rural development programs since the late 1950s draw a few implications for developing countries which strive for socio-economic growth through rural development.

### 1. Nationwide strategy vs. localized strategy

The first implication comes from the above consideration of appropriate target re-

gions in Korea. That is, the rural development strategy needs to be set according to the level of economic development. For those in early economic development stage or poorest countries, the nation-wide rural development strategy may be more effective in eradicating absolute poverty of the country. As growth period proceeds, there may occur regional development disparities, among areas nearby big cities, general rural areas and remote rural areas, then selective development tactics will be necessary for which area-specific growth policy programs are adopted. In the matured stage, development goals and demands of various regions are diversified, which needs to be reflected in diversified development strategies.

In Korea, SMU worked as a full-fledged government-involved national strategy to enhance the level of social and economic rural life, and then the strategies became differentiated to tackle the development issues and tasks encountered during each period. Looking at the current rural development strategy and projects of other developing countries, Vietnam's National Target Program (2010-2020) and China's New Rural Reconstruction Movement seem to adopt the nationwide rural development strategy, whereas general ODA projects, such as KOICA's CLMV (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam) *Saemaul Undong* aid projects, are all implemented as pilot programs.

## 2. Appropriate geographical boundary of policy

The above analysis draws the second implication; geographic boundary of developmental programs and projects needs to be dependent upon the level of industrialization. In the case of agriculture-oriented social and economic system, the spatial range of basic social interaction is mostly village, and, therefore, it will be the development unit on which terminal public interventions are focused. In another case of social and economic system in which shift to industrialization and urbanization is underway, rural residents' linkages of social and economic network expand from village to township to district/city. Therefore, geographical expansion of the development unit should follow for efficient development policy intervention.

The comprehensive development strategies since 1980s in Korea reflected such shift in geographical expansion of socio-economic network of rural society as explained above. Not to mention, the rural social structure of developing countries may define the choice of development units taking into differences in industrial sector constitution. For example, in the Asian mode of agricultural production, in which the rice production requires water resources on a large scale, it is usually

village and a village forms, not only an administrative unit, but also a social community. In many cases, the administrative unit matches with residents' boundary of everyday lives, and so with basic and primary policy target. Contemporary many rural societies in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, they are facing with severe pressure toward urbanization and big plantation with a small number of employed farmworkers. Alternatively, administrative capacity from the central and local governments do not work effectively and harmoniously with traditional tribal societies which have strong tribal identity, being scattered in rural areas. It will require more abstract and far-reaching policy principle which is applicable in diverse and localized contexts.

### 3. Application of Korean rural development strategies to developing countries and regions

The following table summarizes the above discussion. It shows that rural development strategies which Korea has experienced during previous several decades may apply to developing countries and regions, differentiated by income level and the degree of urbanization.

Table 7. Suggestion of Rural Development Strategies to Developing Countries by Income and Urbanization

Detailed Program	By Income			By Urbanization		
	Poorest Countries	Lower income Countries	Middle Income Countries	Agricultural Area	Transitional Area	Predominantly Non-Agricultural Area
Community Development	○			○		
SMU	○	○		○		
Comprehensive Rural Area Development		○	○	○	○	○
Settlement Zone Development Project		○	○		○	○
Comprehensive Village Development		○	○	○		

Given below are specific directions and considerations for each development strategy.

*Community Development (CD) strategy*

Mobilization of rural extension advisors from target villages may be required, but if the village cannot afford to provide extension advisors by themselves, the central government needs to send extension advisor after training. Developing countries which cannot afford to support all villages may enforce pilot project on selected villages. This CD strategy is especially applicable to the village which is area of similar economic activity, for example, those villages with intensive rice cultivation is widely implemented, or in which specialty crop is intended to be introduced for commercial cultivation.

*Saemaul Undong*

It is worth of attention to introducing the SMU strategy among low-income countries through combination among minimal government support, voluntary participation of villages and local resources. Since the beginning of the SMU focused on village-level social development activities such as village gardening, mind development etc. other than income, it can act as a starting point for these countries for village development. SMU used to be based on mobilization and cooperation among villagers, and, therefore, it is more likely successful in homogeneous agricultural areas.

*Comprehensive Rural Area Development*

Since comprehensive rural area development project applies to the spatially extended region, this is difficult to apply to the poorest countries with lack of traffic infrastructure. Through this strategy, developing countries may try to diversify rural income sources from both sectors of agriculture and non-agriculture.

*Settlement Zone Development Project*

This program is to develop rural centers, such as township, and so expecting trickle effects down to remote rural areas. It would be better applying to lower-middle or

middle-income countries than poorest countries in which development priorities are at the village level. Also, this is suitable for area in which urbanization process has started or proceeded to a certain extent. It is because this strategy focuses on hardware development, that is, living environment and infrastructure etc. in central areas with concentrated population.

### *Comprehensive Village Development*

Because it is more common that the villagers in poorest countries do not have enough ability to make mid- or long-term plan for themselves, there need to be existent regional development experts who would initiate development process of need identification, resource finding, and planning by stages. As these processes require unified relationship among participants, villagers' homogeneity would be a necessary condition, and it is hard to implement in area where relatively disparate economic and social activities are prevalent.

## VI. Conclusions

This paper demonstrates that rural development strategies and policies in Korea have been evolved with different target areas and geographical development units. Since the 1950s, the Korean government has implemented several policies to develop agriculture and rural area for food security. Especially, five rural development strategies and policies are selected in this paper to introduce detailed experiences and to suggest effective strategies for developing countries.

CD project was more likely to operate that inhabitants engage in the project to improve their village condition. Above all, resources such as expertise, budget, natural resource, or human resource etc. which community owned have been mobilized for self-help. On the other hand, if there is lack in resources, government supported the community with subsidies. The special feature of CD was the cooperation between residents and external extension advisors. Pilot CD projects were implemented in villages.

During the 1960s, as the gap between rural and urban area had increased, *Saemaul Undong* had focused on the comprehensive development of rural villages including income increase since 1971. This project incorporated method of bot-

tom-up and top-down development combined. Voluntary-based leaders played key roles in deciding projects and leading the public to achieve consensus to manage the developmental projects. The *Saemaul Undong* was implemented as comprehensive rural development campaign with entire sector including industry, environment, culture, welfare, etc. SMU was implemented as a national project with promoting competition of each village in order to get incentive only for well performed villages.

During the export-oriented industrialization period, some labor immigration from rural to urban area for higher income in manufacturing and service sectors has occurred. Since then, rural area's elderly population has increased, and agricultural productivity decreased. Korean government emphasized on comprehensive improvement of the local economic, social, and cultural environment, and infrastructure. Comprehensive Rural Area Development project in 1980s and the Settlement Zone Development project in 1990s have conducted to improve rural productivity and living quality with local government's initiative. Comprehensive Rural Area Development project focused on diverse functional linkage between district centers and rural hinterland areas. Meanwhile, the Settlement Zone Development project inclined to the investment in infrastructure in township area.

The beginning of the 21st century saw a new trend of emphasizing social welfare, tourism, quality of life, etc. The Comprehensive Village Development project in this period tried to include these elements in the scheme and preferred the bottom-up mobilization of a combination of villages and collaboration with the local government.

These strategies are differentiated according to the selection of target regions; the CD and Comprehensive Rural Area Development projects were implemented in some areas selected from above, Settlement Zone Development and Comprehensive Village Development projects in areas selected after review the applications submitted from below, and the SMU in nationwide level. Still, geographical development unit shows clear contrast among the strategies. The CD and SMU in earlier period were targeted at the most basic unit, *ri*, whereas the Comprehensive Rural Area Development was implemented for district (*gun*) level. Rural development strategies since then spatially scaled down to *myeon* and *ri* again.

The above observations through comparative analyses produce meaningful implications to developing countries which have various level of socio-economic development. The poorest countries may adopt CD and SMU as their development



strategies not unlike Korea had done in its earlier period. SMU may apply to lower income countries, too. Lower and middle-income countries may consider the rest other strategies depending on policy priority and preference.

It is clear that the rural development strategies should be closely related to, and based upon the current level of urbanization of national territory and industrialization of economy. Except for the Settlement Zone Development project, which is a focused hardware development strategy on township or central areas within countryside, all others would be potentially applicable strategies for agriculture-dominated areas. Meanwhile, those areas which start to incorporate non-agricultural sectors may adopt Comprehensive Rural Area Development and Settlement Zone Development projects which Korea had applied during the stage of industrialization in the 1980s and 1990s, so that unfavorable effects from societal and economic transformation would be minimized through the strategies.

As mentioned previously, this paper tried to provide more detailed application method reflecting diverse national and local conditions of developing countries. In doing this, it focused on the selection of target areas and development units, but it was not able to consider the capacity and will of the central and local governments which, at some points, deeply involved in the development processes, and systematic analysis of their roles remains for future task. Korean experiences may be strong candidates for emulation. It is also worthy of note, however, that they need to be abstracted from the historically and spatially specified realities, which had existed and performed in Korea in the past, and readjusted to fit in today's situations of developing countries.

The recent rural development program being implemented in Vietnam since 2010 until 2020 is arguably a locally-adapted form of *Saemaul Undong*. Also, it is not rare to find out cases in rural development in other countries including Millennium Village Project (MVP) initiated by the UN which are currently continuing with international collaborative projects. Careful observations on the factors which are related to any successful or challenging conditions, including the selection of target region and geographical development units, will lead to further implications in addition to what this paper has found.

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