

Knowledge Exchange on Rural Community-Driven Development in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Countries

SPONSORED BY THE KOREA TRUST FUND FOR ECONOMIC AND PEACE-BUILDING TRANSITIONS

In partnership with the [KDI \(Korea Development Institute\) School of Public Policy and Management](#) and the [Government of Korea's Ministry of Strategy and Finance](#), the World Bank hosted the *Knowledge Exchange on Rural Community-Driven Development in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Countries*. The event was held from May 30 – June 5, 2016 in Daejeon and Seoul in Korea.

The exchange visit brought together 14 government representatives from 5 countries (Afghanistan, Kenya, Myanmar, Nepal, and the Philippines), 6 World Bank staff, and experts from 9 Korean universities and institutions.

The complete list of participants is available [here](#).

Purpose:

- Gain knowledge and conceptualize potential approaches to improving community development efforts based on the implementation experiences and results of Korea's *Saemaul Undong* ("New Village Movement") program;
- Learn the background and approaches used under the program, explore specific strategies for enhancing rural welfare and jobs creation, analyze specific enabling and constraining factors, and apply these experiences to the specific context and needs of the individual country programs;
- Exchange information and learn from each other's program; and
- Facilitate follow-up dialogue and networking with the participating governments through the CDD Global Solutions Group (GSG).



DAY 1: Introduction to *Saemaul Undong* & Country Cases

Welcome Remarks

▶ **Joonkyu Park**, Director for the Korea Ministry of Strategy and Finance, opened the event by underlining the importance of the event in: 1) supporting the participant governments' efforts to respond to the challenges of fragility and conflict; 2) improving upon the agriculture and rural development methodology by drawing upon Korea's knowledge and experiences; and 3) supporting the Bank's goal of ending poverty.

His remarks are available [here](#) in English.

▶ **Prof. Seung Joo Lee**, Associate Dean, KDI School of Public Policy and Management, gave an overview of Korea's commitment to *Saemaul Undong* and its unique success in achieving remarkable growth in a short period of time.

His remarks are available [here](#) in English.

▶ **WanSup Kim**, Program Manager for the World Bank Korea Office, welcomed participants by emphasizing the importance of sharing knowledge with peers from the other participating countries, as well as with the Korean experts and practitioners. He also highlighted the role of the World Bank office in Korea, which serves as a hub for knowledge sharing on various aspects of Korea's development experience.

His remarks are available [here](#) in English.

▶ **Sean Bradley**, Lead Social Development Specialist at the World Bank, gave an overview of CDD programs across the world and some specific issues related to operations in fragile and conflict-affected situations.



SESSION 1: PRESENTATION ON CDD PROGRAMS

(Facilitated by Phil Karp, Lead Knowledge Management Officer, World Bank)

In the first session, country representatives from the Afghanistan, Kenya, Myanmar, Nepal, and the Philippines shared their experiences and challenges of scaling up CDD programs in various contexts.

The panel members and audience discussed how CDD programs evolved with the changing needs and risks in their countries and shared experiences and recommendations on how to resolve some of the challenges they faced while scaling up those programs. View the presentations for [Kenya](#), [Nepal](#), and [Myanmar](#), as well as materials from Nepal on [women's participation](#) and [their CDD program](#).



SESSION 2: SAEMAUL UNDONG IN KOREA'S RURAL DEVELOPMENT

(Professor Jeong Seop Choi, Mokpo National University)

This session focused on Korea's experience in rural development and *Saemaul Undong*, and how it linked CDD programs and activities to enhance frontline service delivery. The participants discussed specific approaches and strategies for enhancing rural welfare and jobs creation under the *Saemaul Undong* program.

The participants learned that *Saemaul Undong* combined a bottom-up and top-down approach, emphasizing the importance of both the central government to set the standards and establish the support structures for *Saemaul Undong*. Professor Choi emphasized the important role that Park Chung Hee, who was president at the time, played in leading the *Saemaul Undong* movement and promoting the power of society (or 'social capital') in local contexts. His role—combined with capable administrative support provided by a strong Ministry of Home Affairs, holistic support from most line ministries, and coordination by a comprehensive structure at central and sub-national levels—was key to the program's success.

- [Korean Rural Development & Saemaul Undong](#)



SESSION 3: SAEMAUL UNDONG IN AGRICULTURE PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENT

(Professor Kyung Ryang Kim, Gangwon University)

This session focused on strategies and approaches used by the *Saemaul Undong* program to improve agriculture productivity.

The participants learned of the land reform that took place in Korea in the late 1940s and 1950s and the conditions that were instrumental in *Saemaul Undong's* success. Land reform helped to reduce inequality between peasants and more endowed rural populations by providing more equitable access to a primary asset for rural development and by dramatically reducing land-rent payments.

Professor Kim suggested that this more egalitarian context was key to *Saemaul Undong's* success since the possibility of capture by local elites is lower. Moreover, due to more egalitarian land ownership, villagers were more interested in participating in community development projects that generally helped to increase their land's value. Professor Kim also explained how *Saemaul Undong* contributed to Korea's social and economic development through multiple functions such as social inclusion and income generation mechanisms.

- [Agricultural Productivity Enhancement and Saemaul Undong](#)



DAY 2: Saemaul Undong & Women's Roles

SESSION 4: COMMUNITY-DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT & SAEMAUL UNDONG

(Professor Do Hyun Han, The Academy of Korean Studies)

This session compared community-driven development and *Saemaul Undong*, and participants examined how government-led efforts were combined with voluntary grass-roots participation.

Professor Han explained how the movement succeeded and has continued to evolve into a movement for community development due to active grassroots participation. The participants learned that the Korean Government pursued *Saemaul Undong* more as a way to rapidly achieve development outcomes through mass mobilization of villagers, versus an effort to promote grassroots representative democracy in villages. However, inadvertently, participation provided villagers with a chance to apply basic democratic principles and exercise greater influence on the local governments.

- [Community-Driven Development & Saemaul Undong](#)



SESSION 5: RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND WOMEN'S ROLE (Professor Kap-Jin Chung, Saemaul History Institute)

This session focused on the role of women's organization under the *Saemaul Undong*. Professor Chung emphasized that women, and female farmers in particular, were regarded as an important element under *Saemaul Undong* for the modernization of Korean rural society. Under *Saemaul Undong*, female farmers overcame two difficulties—a poor economic environment, and a traditional patriarchal system that was based on Confucianism—to realize important increases to their income, and improvements in their living environment and role in society.

The *Saemaul* Women's club demonstrated the potential of women to men in rural areas who refused to recognize women as social and economic agents. The participants also discussed their own program's success stories and challenges in improving inclusiveness of community decision-making, particularly for the inclusion of women.

- [Rural Development and Women's Role](#)



SESSION 6: COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT (Kyung Won Lee, Korea Saemaul-Undong Center)

This session looked at the importance of community leaders especially at the village level. Lee explained how the actual leadership was performed in collaboration with the village chief appointed by the township office. He also emphasized that the *Saemaul* leaders played important roles as change agents disseminating technological innovation and as managers in planning and implementing projects. As such, intensive leadership training was a key feature under *Saemaul Undong*.

The participants learned that the *Saemaul* leaders' training program was organized under government sponsorship with a view to fostering leadership as well as inculcating the *Saemaul* philosophy. These trainings included sessions on: 1) shared experience of trainees and staff members lodging together, 2) cultivating of the *Saemaul* spirit through actual practice, 3) mutual learning through group discussion and presentation of case studies, and 4) follow-up services and support of the project for the graduates.

- [Case Stories: Saemaul Leader's Leadership](#)



DAY 3: Government Role and *Saemaul* Leadership

SESSION 7: GOVERNMENT ROLE AND GOVERNANCE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT (Professor So Jin Kwang, Gachon University)

This session covered the important roles that national and local government authorities played in the effective implementation of *Saemaul Undong*, and the importance of the coordination and integrated structures. The Ministry of Home Affairs oversaw coordination at all levels of Government; local government units had a *Saemaul* Department overseen by the vice-Mayor, and key line ministries included dedicated *Saemaul Undong* divisions.

Professor Kwang also explained how *Saemaul Undong*'s incentive-based performance system worked, with villages divided into three categories—basic, self-help, and self-reliant—that were defined by clear quantitative criteria and received different levels of support accordingly. This system stimulated competitive participation among local communities, and encouraged government–village cooperation through local administration units that had little autonomy during the 1970s.

The presentation also touched upon the importance of the then state-run media as a channel for systematic public education campaigns concerning the movement, which ultimately led to widespread and active participation by local communities. While *Saemaul Undong* had strong central and local government involvement and support, which included the provision of technical, financial, and in-kind resources, defining specific community-level activities remained the responsibility of the villages.

- [Government Role and Governance for *Saemaul Undong*](#)



SESSION 8: EDUCATION FOR SAEMAUL LEADERSHIP (Sang Ho Choi, Mental Research Institute)

This session reviewed how *Saemaul* leadership training was organized to encourage participation by promoting communication among *Saemaul* leaders from various parts of the country. This training provided an opportunity for community leaders to share their experiences at both the regional and national levels with both the rural and urban elite. Formal recognition was an important element in strengthening and legitimizing the leaders, with President Park Chung Hee praising *Saemaul Undong* leaders as “ushers of the nation’s modernization” and “guides of the patriotic movement.” Training, provided by the Training Institute for *Saemaul* Leaders, was geared to the educational levels of the rural communities, and focused more on the *Saemaul* spirit (diligence, self-help, and cooperation) rather than on theories of community development. *Saemaul* leaders also played active roles in local *Saemaul* training institutes, serving as peer-to-peer teachers for new community leaders.

- [Saemaul Training for Saemaul Leadership](#)



DAY 4: Field Visits

On the fourth day of the conference, participants visited two institutions that support rural and community development within and outside of Korea: the [Korea Rural Community \(KRC\) Corporation](#), and [the Agriculture Technology Center of Sejong Metropolitan Authority](#).

Participants first visited KRC, a government-owned enterprise that supports large-scale agricultural production and infrastructure development projects focusing on water resources and land reclamation, as well as community development. KRC also participates in the Government's efforts to extend the *Saemaul Undong* approach internationally. Participants learned of KRC's extensive national program including its rural community development approach, based on similar principles used under *Saemaul Undong* and CDD.

KRC's presentations are shared [here](#) and [here](#).



The visit to the Agriculture Technology Center exposed participants to local government-led research, development, and extension services for farmers of the Sejong Metropolitan area, including support for urban farming, organic farming technologies, and machinery rental services. The summary documentation shared by the Technology Center is shown [here](#).

Participants sought clarification on how the two organizations work with communities, and explored possible linkages with home country institutions.

DAY 5: Next Steps – Action Plans for the Way Forward

SESSION 9: FINALIZATION OF COUNTRY-SPECIFIC ACTION PLANS

(Facilitated by Phil Karp, Lead Knowledge Management Officer, World Bank)

The final day of the conference started by reflecting on the discussions and lessons learned over the past four days. In the first half of the session, the participants shared their main takeaways from the field visits and other interactions.

The Afghan delegation indicated particular interest in discussing further in detail with KRC on their “technology consulting project,” which carries out preliminary feasibility tests, the design and the administration of irrigation and drainage facilities, underwater development and other agricultural development in developing countries. The Philippines delegations were interested in the [Saemangeum land reclamation project](#) that KRC undertook, which turned tidal flats into an eco-friendly agricultural complex. The Myanmar delegation explored the possibilities of adopting agricultural machinery leasing services that the Agricultural Technology Center provides in Sejong city. The Nepalese and Kenyan delegations showed interest in how the Agricultural Technology Center connects urban communities by promoting urban garden and weekend farming.

The delegations then presented their work plans, outlining the status of the CDD programs in their countries, lessons learned, and next steps in relation to the exchange visit.

The representatives from Afghanistan, Kenya, Myanmar, Nepal, and the Philippines expressed interest in further collaboration with *Saemaul Undong* experts to train, mobilize, and motivate their community leaders. The Afghan and Nepalese delegations felt that a strongly motivated leadership at the top-level of the administration and consistency in commitment is necessary for the successful implementation of CDD programs. Both countries also wanted to collaborate with Korean experts and other countries to implement the concept of Women’s club in their countries, and on farmers’ cooperatives. Lastly, Afghan delegates were interested in learning more about the approach taken by Korea in developing a Rural Development Strategy. The Myanmar delegation took note of the close collaboration between different branches of government, the strong gender awareness and role of women in the program, and the emphasis placed on farm and non-farm rural livelihoods (including vocational education).





The representatives from the Philippines took particular note of the mind-set change that the *Saemaul Undong* movement brought about creating a “can-do” attitude that seemed to have helped drive Korea’s rapid development. They felt that without this change in mind set, the movement’s long-term impact on individual and community well-being would not have been possible. The Filipino representatives were also interested in the balance of top-down/bottom-up aspect of the *Saemaul Undong*, and expressed interest in further development of a training for village leaders that focus on the *Saemaul* spirit of self-reliance/self-help and an entrepreneurial mindset to ensure lasting and sustainable change. For the representative from the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, the exchange has encouraged her to promote a closer review of the CDD program that is currently pending adoption by the regional government.

The Nepali delegation noted the important role of land reform, and the performance based approach applied, which they saw as critical to the success of the *Saemaul Undong*. The Nepal delegation also noted the importance of branding for the movement, and the integrated/holistic approach (including culture) to supporting community development outcomes. They expressed interest in further technical collaboration with the Korean experts. Kenya also noted the critical role that cross-government coordination played in the success of the program, and the importance of the incentive-based system of village support. Lastly, the delegations from all countries noted the importance of coordination not only between government agencies, but also with other public organizations such as the National Agricultural Cooperative Federation and the National Fishery Cooperative Federation. They expressed interest in further guidance on institutional arrangements that strengthened and enabled smooth coordination between ministries, government agencies, and relevant organizations.

The following presentations were made:

- [Afghanistan](#)
- [Myanmar](#)
- [Nepal](#)
- [The Philippines](#) and [the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao](#)
- [Kenya](#)



Closing Remarks & Selected Feedback from the Government Participants

There are many lessons emerging as to the necessity of strong leadership/political backing, which have attributed to the success of *Saemaul Undong*.

Capacity building is an essential component of the *Saemaul Undong* model: it fostered discipline among the rural population to change the mindset.

Korea's remarkable progress gives hope to us that our situations can be changed to achieve the same status.

Alongside capacity building, people's mindset should be changed to adopt proactive attitudes and can-do spirit.

Experiences from other countries where there are many similarities in program elements and challenges.

This is a country in which almost everybody was poor in 1960 and which has eliminated extreme poverty completely within this half-century... Thank you for sharing these successes with us.

We were surprised by the rapid economic development of Korea. The *Saemaul Undong* Movement laid the foundation, allowing Korea to achieve modernization and development.

The *Saemaul Undong* leadership program can be used across the CDD programs, to help the government address its underlying challenges of policy implementation in social capital, participation and ownership by people.

We should learn from Korea's sense of ownership, and competitive spirit as part of efforts to fight poverty and foster the country's socio-economic transformation.

Introducing male-female paired leadership in rural villages can empower women and facilitate transformation and modernization of traditionally gender-biased societies.

Strong national political leadership with a commitment to sustainable CDD and empowerment of local communities can help facilitate socioeconomic transformation in developing countries.





If you have any questions on the exchange, please contact:
Sean Bradley (sbradley@worldbank.org),
Milena Petrova Stefanova (mstefanova@worldbank.org),
or
Kyung Min In (kin1@worldbank.org)

And visit our website for other CDD materials at:
http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/communitydriven_development

