



[EAI Webinar] ADRN National Level Workshop

Support for Good Governance in Korea through Development Cooperation

East Asia Institute (EAI)

I. Good Governance Business in Korea

Good Neighbors: Good Governance of Civil Society

- After Dambisa Felicia Moyo's Dead Aid, there has been controversy over the effectiveness of development aid in the international community. No matter how good the plan, performance methods, and evaluation systems are, good results are difficult to obtain without a desirable form of an organizational structure, or good governance. Although many international organizations such as the World Bank, UNDP, and USAID have been implementing the execution of development cooperation for a long time, concrete results were difficult to achieve without the establishment of governance. This led to an interest in establishing a governance system, and governance started to play an important role in the process of policy formulation and implementation in development cooperation.
- Aside from the governance of the recipient country, the governance of the donor country, in this case Korea, needs to discuss and check the governance of the international development policy. Instead of seeking ways on how to convey our democracy, it is necessary to reflect on the overall progress of the development cooperation policy. Ever since the Busan Aid General Assembly, the Korean government's interest in governance increased over time and the input of financial resources began to expand correspondingly. From the government's International Development Cooperation Committee, there are various ministries and municipalities, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Strategy and Finance, private sectors such as CSOs, corporations, and academia; however, all the aforementioned sectors are equipped with merely a structure or form. For this reason, it is necessary to work together starting from the planning of the business.
- There are circumstances in which it is difficult for NGOs to do business with recipient countries. Particularly, it is almost impossible to proceed with projects related to health and education without discussion with the recipient country's government. However, it is very difficult to cooperate with the government of the recipient country. Many obstacles exist when seeking for cooperation regarding the execution of projects because neither the central government nor the local government has a well-



established governance system. Nevertheless, the reason why there is no effort being made to progress or improve governance is that the focus is solely put on individual businesses, and not on pushing to establish or improve governance. Even if this is implemented, the system often ends up becoming ineffective because it is not well supported.

- Notwithstanding, it is still difficult to push for governance to be a condition of a business. The difference in the level of urgency felt by the local government and the residents may negatively impact the project. Therefore, it is necessary to proceed with the project carefully and consistently by means of negotiation and coordination with the recipient country.
- In order to listen to the opinions of the partner countries, it is essential to discuss with the government, but most often than not, this does not represent the opinions of the residents. In many cases, the voices of the residents are not well reflected in the recipient countries' government policies. Consequently, the role of the CSO is crucial because a gap between the government and the community exists. Moreover, it is vital to push to listen to the residents' opinions. Creating a local organization to express the opinions of the residents can empower the process of delivering such opinions to the government. As the voices of individual residents often do not reach the government, it is important to unite such voices so that they can be represented. In this process, it is always important to maintain an inclusive and democratic structure. Although it cannot be assumed that discrimination will not exist among residents, sufficient attention should be paid to ensure that no groups are excluded from this process.

Office of Government Policy Coordination: Good Governance Projects of the Korean Government

- From the donor perspective, governance can be divided into three issues. 1) In regards to the governance of conflict-prone countries and conflict-prone countries, the main focus is on how to provide emergency support to refugees and orphans in war. To this end, the HDP Nexus, which encompasses humanitarian aid with development and peace, is being reinforced. More efforts are needed to mainstream the Korean government's business. 2) As for issues related to developmental resources, improving the anti-corruption situation in developing countries and issues related to development finance, and securing tax revenue for development play an important role. The Korean government also joined the Addis Tax Initiative (ATI) and is making an effort to strengthen the financial flow of developing countries. 3) With support from the public administration sector, the aim is also to improve democracy and governance through the advancement of public services or administrative services. Although there was a lot of support for public administration in the past, the scale has decreased over time. Amongst the different types of governance, economic development capacity and support for the economic sector have strengthened, but support for the law and the electoral system is low. Although the recipient country's election management capacity was carried out under the support of the National Election Commission, the national support for this was put on hold due to the judgment that negatives issues rooted from the fraudulent elections.



- Korea's support for governance towards developing countries is still weak, and the immediate trend is still undergoing change. It would be more efficient if there were goals, budget expansions, and roadmaps for the government level. It would be helpful if there were projects that sent civil servants and retired civil servants of the recipient countries to developing countries. Overall, international development cooperation should be first and foremost in the mainstreaming of the government's agenda and projects.

KOICA: Good governance business of public institutions

- There were concerns about how to apply the reflection of the COVID-19 pandemic situation, the government's main policy of the Digital New Deal, and the continuation of peace issues in the good governance project. The Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG16) is a goal in itself, but it is also the driving force behind other goals. How this can be connected to the 'realization of a peaceful, just, and inclusive society' that the SDGs strive to achieve is a concern.
- Looking at the progress and achievements of KOICA's governance projects, 98% of the projects corresponded to improving the effectiveness of administrative services and the inclusiveness of the legal system; this is similar to the previous strategic goals. The target business centered around 43 governance/peace projects that were carried out after 16 years, strengthening the government policies and the human resources of the civil servants of the recipient country, e-government businesses, and strengthening public security capabilities. It is also correct that projects related to strengthening local administrative capacity, preventing corruption, strengthening transparency, and holding fair elections, which were sub-goals of strengthening the responsibility of the political administration system, were relatively low. Citizen participation and capacity building were also relatively small.
- In accordance to the second emphasis on peace-related business, business involving conflict-prone countries, business held with the HDP Nexus seeking to improve the inclusiveness of the legal system, policing, and preventing violence were separately classified. Furthermore, a peace strategy goal was added so that this part could be explicitly discovered/implemented. So far, a project that allows the local residents to be the main characters, independent from the policy, is being carried out. The label, which used to be called a public administration strategy or governance strategy, has been expanded and reorganized as governance peace strategy.
- It was noted that SDG16 is about political inequality and that establishment of democracy is an important means to resolve political inequality in terms of comprehensive social promotion and establishment of an inclusive accountability system. The focus was on the citizens' voice and participation in the decision-making process, and media reinforcement was added to the program in order to circulate accurate information.
- With the promotion of digitalization caused by COVID-19, an effort is being made to link the provision of ICT-based e-government services with the strengthening of statistical capabilities of major countries. In addition, it is necessary to increase the ability to respond to infectious diseases and to build a social



safety net for the vulnerable and struggling. COVID-19 may be an opportunity to develop specific measures for the basic legal system and infrastructure.

- In regards to the business planning aspect, businesses that have been regarded as an individual or a single business are being reformed into a program structure. Through the linkage to the goal of governance, the effectiveness or sustainability of a project is being reconsidered. Ways on how to enhance the role of local experts according to the type of business are being examined as well. When it comes to public administration, governance, and peace, it is difficult to include sensitive information about a country's politics or system. There is no solution that works for everyone. Therefore, we need to look at the situation over a long-term perspective.

II. The Direction of Development of Korea's Good Governance Business

The necessity of establishing Korea's unique governance business

- It is necessary to think about in which areas of content Korea can perform well in. For example, recently at the G7 summit, Korea was invited as a democratic country. This enhanced Korea's national image as a democratic country and emphasized Korea's active role in resolving the anti-corruption problem. Korea's anti-corruption level is not very good, but in terms of the standard indicators, it has competitive edge. In addition, Korea's achievements in the prevention and control of COVID-19 can appeal to Korea's strength in the governance of quarantine.
- KOICA's SDG16-related projects also lack distinctive features that set it apart from other projects. There is a need to build upon areas and programs where Korea has a comparative advantage. Since many tasks such as judicial tasks and administrative processes are being pursued simultaneously, there is a lack in specific specialization. Following the footsteps of what is happening in Canada, it is important to promote the reputation of peace and work toward a direction that can emphasize such a reputation. For example, Korea has a lot of experienced military personnel due to compulsory service; therefore, efforts in areas related to public security, security, and post-conflict can be highlighted.
- Even within the Southeast Asia region, Korea is responsible for many projects, but these projects lack scale. Although the scale is small, since there are several tasks to be performed simultaneously, the dimension and internality are insufficient. This is an early stage in which we are making progress little by little. For the past 10 years, we have focused on visible and technical aspects such as indicators and infrastructure. In order to solidify the policies, action must be taken now. It is necessary to know exactly what the state can do in terms of public development, what can be achieved by working with NGOs, and where the private sector may need help. It is also necessary to discuss the policy authority and direction that government agencies such as the Office of Government Policy Coordination and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs can take.



- In the perspective of KOICA, which is in charge of all the project ordering, planning, and evaluation, it is necessary to understand the limits of the policy. The act of not incorporating the idea of democracy and creating another program to fit into the current PMC project would be a trick with shallow means. It is necessary to systematize whether democratic peace governance can be mainstreamed in infrastructure projects that require large-scale financial investment.

Possibility of supporting good governance in Korea through collaborative efforts between the government and NGOs

- In reference to how much the government uses CSOs from project discovery to implementation, the implementation process that OECD countries carry out through CSOs accounts for 15%, but Korea only covers 2%. Even this, however, has no directivity and fluctuates severely. Consequently, it can be interpreted that there is no willingness to implement this policy. Through CSO, efforts must be implemented to listen to the public opinion in the field. NGOs account for about 7% of the KOICA project. The combination PCM is about 50%, and it is a project implemented through intergovernmental consultation. The participation of NGOs in this particular project is very low.
- The willingness of the government to listen to the opinions of civil societies of partner countries is thought to be insufficient. Rather, it may have the opposite effect and contribute to the regression of democracy. Hearing the voices of CSOs in the field can be of great help in the policy making process. It is very difficult to set indicators for citizen autonomy of Saemaul Undong. There is a fundamental difficulty in gathering the residents to set goals and connect these with indicators to evaluate performance.
- Therefore, it is important to listen to the opinions derived from on-site settings. In a democracy, businesses advance when indicators advance, but people are usually integrated. As more fields of concentration subdivide, more research should be developed in an integrated manner in order to advance. Just as women's issues should be mainstreamed, democratization as a whole should also be included as a crosscutting method.

The Future Route of Good Governance in Korea

- The public administration sector is declining, and support is mainly being placed on economic governance. In the background, there is a higher-level plan such as the project implementation plan and budget, and there is no system to discover the project. On the contrary, due to the nature of ODA projects, projects are discovered at the request of the recipient country. Even if the government has a strategy or target, the policy budget may fluctuate without the request of the recipient country. If the government first organizes a resource allocation plan and delivers roughly laid out directions and guidelines to sub-organizations, then strategic policy discovery and implementation will be possible.
- The reason that the support is centered on economic governance is that the Ministry of Strategy and Finance's PSP project was centered on the experience that shared economic development experience.



However, it is necessary to expand the transmission of social development experience. Beyond actual economic development, support for public governance that can reduce corruption in recipient countries and establish democratic institutionalization is needed. Strategies for each sector will also be announced soon.

- Korea's comparative advantage lies in the computerization of public administration, but it often expresses disapproval over the corruption of the recipient country. In addition, although it is acknowledged that there is a lack in effort to listen to the voices of civil society and local communities, the recipient country's government will ultimately set the priority even if there is an opinion from the subgroup. There are many instances when the existence of the business itself is not known at the negotiating table because the government is quick to block them in advance.
- Efforts should be made in the field of selection and concentration. There was insufficient discovery of projects in which civil society or local communities could participate in. Although it is true that women and the environment have already become mainstream and thus, are being screened, democracy and peace are not the same. Efforts will be made to improve the system.
- Intergovernmental ODA cooperation and strategic cooperation between Japan and Korea for Myanmar are necessary. In regards to strategic ODA, a channeling in which the Korean INGO, and not the government, helps the NGOs of the recipient country to assist the facilities of the local community would be preferable. In Western institutions, the expertise of field workers is recognized and their empathy/social skills are also evaluated extensively; whereas in Korea, evaluation is conducted based on surveys. This needs improvement. ■

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Date of Issue: 23 July 2021

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ISBN 979-11-6617-183-3 95340

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