Integrated Approach to Local Rural Development

Report of an Interdisciplinary Seminar
Makati, Philippines
31 March - 3 April 1975

Editor: Marilyn Campbell
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Rural Development in Korea: the Saemaeul Movement

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The Saemaeul Movement is a national modernization movement designed to develop the people and the self-sufficiency of Korea. The Movement is also designed to develop deeply rooted democracy along with national benefits and improved welfare of the people.

The Movement has three major goals: spiritual revolution, social reform, and economic development. The prerequisites to the realization of such goals are diligence, self-help, and mutual cooperation.

The Movement attempts to increase the production and income of the people by involving them in cooperative endeavours, and also hopes to achieve an income level of 1.4 million won ($3500) per household in the rural areas by the beginning of the 1980s.

By 1972 the Movement had developed its system of operation and was able to begin three main projects: environmental improvements; spiritual enlightenment; and increasing production and income.

In 1973, all villages across the country participated in the Movement that now gave a higher priority to cooperative production and increases in income than to environmental improvements.

All rural villages were classified into one of three groups (basic, self-help, or independent) according to their development level in order to implement the Movement according to the characteristics and ability of each group. The projects were also classified by basic, supported, or income-increasing projects.

Projects of the Movement

The projects for the Saemaeul Movement were classified into three sectors according to their aims and functions in 1973.

First were the basic projects necessary to all rural villages, such as Saemaeul cultivation, expansion of farm roads, replacement of roofs, and others for updating the living standards.

Second were supported projects whose components were reclassified into two categories:

1. national land preservation: rearrangement of small urban areas, such as towns and townships and arrangement of water resources. These were taken care of by the Ministry of Home Affairs, which aimed to reinvest the better distributed wages from the public sector to the village people.
2. cultural and welfare programs, such as the electrification of rural villages, construction
of rural model houses, placement of water supply systems and communication facilities, provision of medical services, etc., which were managed by the concerned ministries.

And third were income-increasing projects, such as reforestation, sapling cultivation, production of domestic industrial products, and the cooperative production product. Also the project of improving the production frame was included in the third.

Effects of the Movement

The Saemaeul Movement is actually a multipurpose movement, which can be defined variously depending on what aspect is to be emphasized.

It is a villagers' campaign to improve their standard of living; it is a regional development movement; and it is a national movement because of the degree of participation.

Since the Movement was born in our country three years ago, our society has changed very much. Above all, the Movement has formed a strong positive mental attitude for self-help development of the rural areas. Secondly, the fundamental living conditions have been modernized and there has been an increase in income in the rural areas through using cooperation and modernization of agriculture methods.

The accomplishments so far have encouraged us to believe that, based on the foundation already constructed, we will be able to carry out the long-range plan, whose target year is 1981.

Through basic environmental and the simple income-increasing projects, the government has formed the base of the Saemaeul Movement. Through the production-base formation and the repeated income-increasing projects the government plans to bring in the self-supporting stage along with a standard environment and an expansion of production in the agricultural areas during the three years 1974–76. On the other hand, the government, stressing the production facilities and the income-increasing resources excluding those of agriculture, will do its best to realize national self-reliance during the five years 1977–81.

Thus by the target year of 1981, all the villages in the nation will be transformed into desirable standard villages with an income level of $3000 per household through the farmers' own efforts.

To achieve these goals, the government has the following policies:

Priority Projects

The implementation of the Saemaeul Movement gives much importance to the spiritual enlightenment of villagers, and although some effort is being made in this area, it has less priority than the other projects.

The physical projects of the Movement, which have a higher priority, are:
1. formation of a production base;
2. increase in income;
3. forestry conservation and tree planting;
4. welfare projects.

Government Support

(1) Basic policies of the central government

All the policies of the central government to be put into effect in the village will be effectively systematized and supported from the point of long-range development of the villages. The projects of each village should be coordinated and relevant to have a maximum effect, e.g., village-inside roads linked with farm roads, which are also linked with main roads.

(2) Patterns of government support

All the projects are classified into three types: self-effort projects by the villagers; common support projects; special support projects. Self-effort projects are those projects carried out through the villagers' self-efforts without any support from the government, e.g., the projects for barnyard manure production, time-limiting farming, and for making common funds.

Common support projects are projects that are to be carried out with commonly supported materials like cement, iron bars, etc., as village-inside projects, sewerage projects, and smaller irrigation facilities.

Special support projects are those projects carried out under the special support of every ministry that comprise with farm land consoli-
dation, rural community electrification, and the multiple-purpose projects.

(3) Implementing policies of the local government

All the policies of the local government will be pushed forward, concentrating on the formation of a village-oriented system.

Especially, the improvement of the administration system in Eup or Myon will consolidate the local government leadership for the effective guidance of the villages.

Projects that are being managed by the villages, including tree planting and sapling cultivation, will be advanced for expansion step by step by making local funds available.

Therefore, the projects will become smaller in scale, but on the other hand, the number of them will be increased.

The projects to increase income will be carried out by a number of ways so that the village people may save the funds to increase their income.