

Accelerating Rural Development in Africa: ‘Sharing Korea’s Community Modernization Experience With Africa Part III

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2.2 The Gradual Evolutionary of Korea’s Modernization Campaign

One of the most difficult tasks in community driven development initiatives is scaling up success from one model village and replicating it at sectoral or national level. The challenge becomes acute when community based projects are scaled up rapidly, because in such cases, most extension workers are mostly poorly trained and have little experience. Korea’s modernization campaign was successful because it overcame the scaling up trap. The process of modernization in Korea was however not sudden, even though compared to other countries with similar initiatives, it was faster.

A key characteristic of community modernization campaign projects in Korea is that it was operationalized to produce tangible and observable results that resonated with the needs and aspirations of the local populace. This approach spurred an increased level of morale and high energy among the individuals. The successive stages of the modernization campaign built on the achievements and momentum created by the previous phases. The community modernization center summarized this unconventional approach as ‘meet rural inhabitants’ felt and noticeable needs→ Impart self -assurance in the local populace register concrete progress in rural development’ (SMU, 2014).

The decision to concentrate on projects aiming at improving rural conditions of living at the beginning of the campaign must thus be strategic and deliberate one; it is easier to produce observable results through activities like creating village roads, renovating houses, putting up laundry facilities, planting forests among others. If these projects show impressive results and point to a desired future if these projects continued, local residents are likely to be more willing to live the spirit of diligence, self help and cooperation, by voluntarily contributing additional resources to supplement the government's resource deficiency. In Korea's case, the underpinning philosophy among the rural population was 'We can do it', to signify they were able to catch up with their urban counterparts through dedicated efforts. This means that the effect of reformed mindsets must take root in rural communities to prop up the success of the community modernization.

However, it is point to note that as the government implemented these basic activities, it also did undertook other complimentary projects, such as construction of expressways and reforestation that harmonized with the village Face-lifting projects, and provided interim employment to rural residents as modernization went on (ADB, 2012, Choi, 2012). These temporary employments helped to increase the income of rural households, while holding their commitment to the ongoing modernization activities. Similarly, while the government relied on performance based allotment of funds to villages, it also provided remedial training to poor performing ones. This competitive approach to allocating funds to villages has also been used in Philippine's CDD with relative success(Reeds, 2012).

The striking difference between the initial phase and the scaling up phase of Korea's modernization activities was the scope and composition of activities. The second phase included communal projects, projects to modernize agriculture to raise household

earnings, and diversified sources of income other than agriculture. In this stage, the campaign also set up training centers focused on bringing more stakeholders on board, through public education to government officials as well as influential community leaders.

The success stories of the village modernization projects provides the basis for the nationalization of the campaign, in which the ideology gains credibility and acceptance among urban dwellers. In this way modernization ideology penetrates workplaces, towns and cities, factories and corporations. The level of collaboration also changes from focusing on a single village to cooperation between different villages: instead of concentrating on single village characteristics, implementers of the modernization campaign turn focus to regional resource endowments and expand the scope and nature of projects to reflect the regional needs and resources. For example, Korea's campaign scaled agriculture production from a single village to dual village undertakings, and further transformed most small scale village-based income agriculture to larger commercial agricultural projects and modern community factories. This dualism, has its advantages, such as spurring the growth regional economic bloc; this regional expansion also enabled the construction of infrastructural facilities that linked different regions, further spurring a regional economic boom (ADB, 2012). This phase provides an opportunity for synergy as well as efficiency in the utilization of common resources and collaboration of neighboring villages.

As the villages and interlinked village projects records greater leaps of success, and the communities increasingly became enthusiastic, the government begins to gradually reduce its financial support to the projects, allowing greater control and ownership by rural residents. This government exit strategy was necessary for long term sustainability of the projects.

As the modernization Korea's campaign proceeded in incremental stages, each phase had clearly defined set of goals and activities to achieve them; specific resources, both human and financial, a time frame and evaluation mechanism and yardstick, a guiding theme or a galvanizing ideology. At the center of decision making on the use of resources in village projects were village councils made up of opinion leaders and residents drawn from the local population. These leaders received modularized training from a special task force created by the government to oversee the successful implementation of the projects, as well as from the new village training institute. The main advantage of this participatory and decentralized approach is that it entrenched democracy at the village level, and also enables increased self-assurance among village residents.

The table 1 below is a snapshot of the practical steps in the evolutionary phases of the community modernization campaign in Korea.

Phase	Priority Projects	Key Features	GNP (\$) change
Phase1:Foundation & Groundwork (1970-1973)	Improving living environments: Expanding roads inside villages, construction of common laundry facilities, improving roofs, kitchens and fences. . Increasing income: Expanding agricultural roads, improving farmland and seeds, division of labor. Attitude Reform: Fostering diligence and frugality and cooperative atmosphere.	Launching and igniting the campaign. Government initiated activities Top priority on improving living environment	249 (1970), 394 (1973)

Phase2: Proliferation (Scaling up) (1974-1976)	<p>Increasing Income: Strengthening rice field ridges, consolidating creeks, encouraging combined farming, operating common working places, identifying non agricultural income sources</p> <p>Attitudinal reform: Attitudinal changes through the modernization's education and public relations activities</p> <p>Improving living conditions: Improving housing and water supply systems, operating village centers.</p>	<p>Expanding the program scope and functions</p> <p>Increasing income and changing attitudes.</p>	540 (1974), 799 (1976)
Phase 3: Active implementation (1977-1979)	<p>Rural areas: encouraging construction of modern housing, promoting growth of special purpose plants, running industrial facilities to combine agriculture and manufacturing</p> <p>Urban areas: Paving alleys, cleaning, fostering order</p> <p>Corporations and factories: increasing productivity, conservation of materials, promoting humane labor management practices</p>	<p>Larger units of implementation by linking villages in the same region</p> <p>Economies of scale</p> <p>Appearance of distinct-unit characteristics</p>	1009 (1977), 1636 (1979)
Phase4: Reformation (1980-1989)	<p>Social atmosphere: Kindness, orderliness and cooperation.</p> <p>Economic development: Combined farming, distribution improvement,</p>	<p>Transformation to privately run organization</p> <p>Heightening the division of roles</p>	1598 in 1980 and 1636 in 1979

	credit union activities, Environmental activities: clean ups, establishing parks country wide, building better access roads	between the government and the private sectors Escape from inactivity and contraction	
Phase5: Autonomous growth(1990-1999)	Healthy atmosphere: Developing traditional culture, emphasizing work, encouraging healthy lifestyles, reestablishing morals Economic stability: Economic recovery, intensified urban- rural trade, diligence and prudence and thriftiness Living conditions: Inculcate better living environments, emphasize autonomous lifestyles	Reinforce the basic autonomy and independence Meeting the need for liberalization and localization Efforts to overcome the economic downturn	5886 in 1990 11,3385 in 1996 8595 in 1999

Source (New village movement Center, SMU, 2014)

2.3.1 Summary of significant lessons from the evolution of the campaign

Countries that intend to implement this model of community development should begin with pilot programs and work on bringing seeable/detectable results. Pilot projects should be based on a village with homogenous characteristics, and then gradually replicated to other villages. The success of one stage provides the momentum for the next. In Korea's case, the initial success provided the wheel power that propelled this movement from a village campaign to dual village projects, and finally to a national tool for enshrining growth and affluence.

However, the success of the modernization campaign in the rural community is also dependent on the existence of strong supply side and demand side will. In Korea, the

success of the campaign is a manifestation of the then President's commitment to developing rural communities. On the other hand, rural residents had a strong desire to effectively use the resources they received to change their deplorable situation.

The incremental expansion of projects enables local residents in villages to develop enhanced skills, capabilities and accumulated experience to manage more sophisticated projects. This comes along with developing local institutions and leadership to run the projects. Similarly, it is imperative to provide education focused on reforming mindsets; the landmark feature of Korea's community modernization campaign was its ability to reform attitudes of rural inhabitants and impart a 'can do' spirit. This formed the bedrock of success for the campaign in rural communities. In addition, as much as possible, it is requisite to accompany rural modernization projects, with complimentary projects that provide interim employment to rural residents.

Likewise, each phase of modernization must be accompanied with explicit goals and activities to accomplish them, resources to implement them, a galvanizing theme/ideology, a completion time frame and a clear evaluation mechanism. It is also pertinent that as competitive villages are rewarded with more funding, remedial training is provided to laggards to give them an opportunity to improve.

At the initial stages of this modernization campaign the competitiveness of the village may be based on efficiency in utilization of resources. However, as they scale up, this efficiency is augmented with economies of scale, whereby two or more villages link to undertake common projects and use common facilities. But this needs existence of high level of social capital that embraces cooperation with neighboring communities. Furthermore, as more villages combine resources to increase the size and scope of their projects, they are able to enjoy higher returns.

In Africa, Democratic Republic of Congo has attempted to implement Korea's model of community modernization, especially following these incremental steps. The projects centered on specific villages where homogeneity is the defining characteristic. In the preliminary years, the project focused on educating community leaders for the modernization campaign and introducing recommended farming methods in the selected villages. The selected communities, then started farming and realizing the returns. In the second stage, the projects zeroed in on modernizing rural houses in the same villages. The third phase was the scaling up phase; the success from pilot villages were consolidated and replicated to other villages. The successful projects are also documented and shared with other communities as case studies. In the final phase, the campaign introduced advanced methods of agriculture, meanwhile the communities that implemented the initial projects began to realize increased household income from improved production. This case does not only prove the significance of the gradual expansion of community modernization projects, but shows that Korea's model of community renewal is attainable in Africa.