

UNDP in Korea

1966 - 2009



50
YEARS

Empowered lives. Resilient nations.

Cover Issue

1960's

1970's

1980's

1990's

2000's

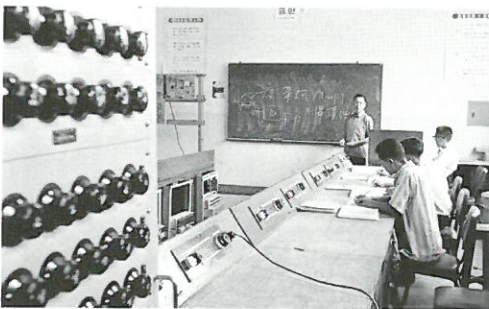
2010's



After the Post-War Rehabilitation Period (1950-59), Korea in the 1960s remained a developing country with enormous development challenges. With a mandate to help people build a better life, UNDP supported Korea with knowledge transfer and establishment of the 'soft infrastructure' of the country's development, including vocational and skills training as well as science and technology research assistance that extensively covered a number of sectors. Pictured here: a neighborhood of old Seoul in 1964, and present day Seoul. (UN Photo/PB, 1964; VisualM)

Introduction to the UNDP in Korea (1966 - 2009) Series

This publication series is produced on the occasion of UNDP's 50th anniversary in 2016, to recount the history of UNDP's close partnership with Korea throughout the country's remarkable journey. Korea made the transition from one of the poorest countries to a member of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD-DAC) just in a few decades, and the so-called 'Miracle on the Han River' is well known around the world. Nevertheless, few are aware of the story of how the UNDP Country Office in Korea supported Korea's economic and social development for more than 40 years, from 1966 to 2009, with more than 270 projects in some 20 areas with a total budget of USD \$107 million.



UN Photo/JC, 1968

In 2010, the then Ministry of Education, Science and Technology published a book, entitled *The Republic of Korea and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)* in order to provide a consolidated overview of UNDP's work in Korea and the positive impact it had made on Korean society. In this book, Eunwoo Lee (Director-General of the International Cooperation Bureau of the Ministry at the time) noted how UNDP's contribution and achievements in Korea were only known to a few experts who had participated in the programmes, while the general Korean public was unaware of this history due to the lack of UNDP's public relations activities and the language barrier (with most of the programme documents written in English).

On the occasion of UNDP's 50th anniversary in 2016, this publication series of two-pagers therefore seeks to capture, though briefly, some elements of this less well-known history of UNDP's work in Korea, drawing from the aforementioned publication as well as other sources. Among the wide range of fields UNDP worked on in Korea, five key areas are covered: rural development, water management, heavy chemical industries, environmental protection, and social development – all of which have played an integral part in Korea's development process.

This publication series consists of this cover story and five issue briefs on areas of UNDP's work in Korea starting from 1963 when the field office of the UN Special Fund, UNDP's predecessor, was established in Seoul (which evolved into UNDP through a merger with the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance in 1965). Issues 1 to 3 will cover the period before and during Korea's rapid economic growth, and Issues 4 and 5 will present UNDP's projects during the later phase of Korea's development.

1960's

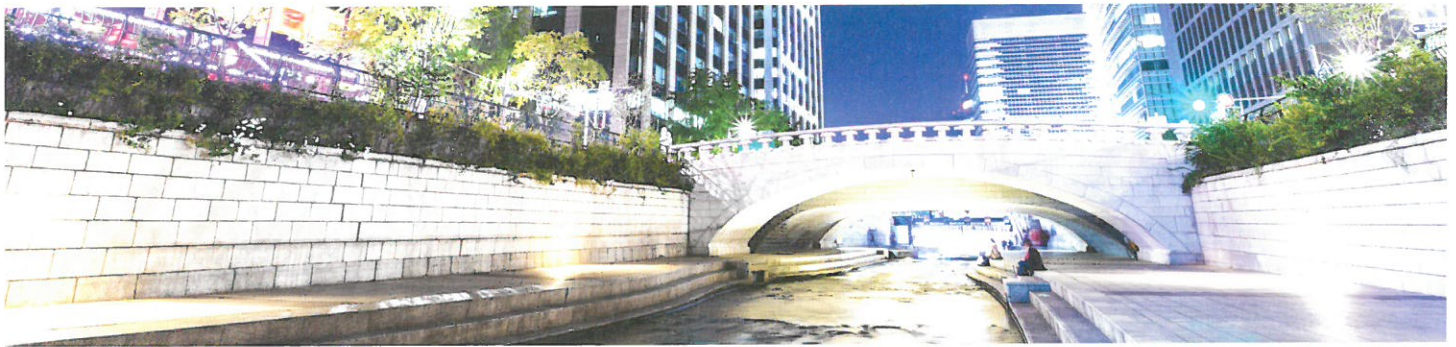
1970's

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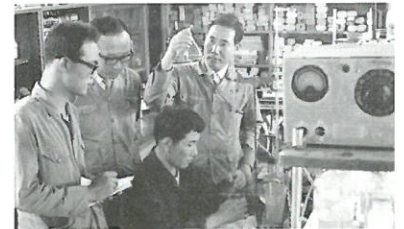
2010's



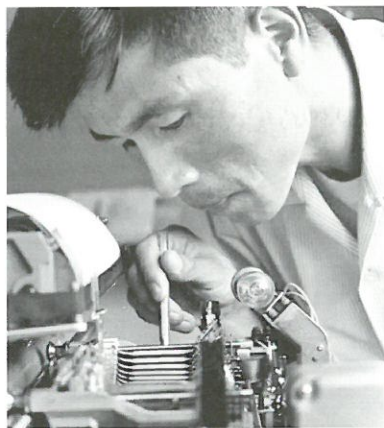
Overview of the Series with a Historical Perspective

During the early phases of cooperation, UNDP was the main decision-maker in terms of which programs were to be implemented. However, as the capabilities of the Korean government strengthened, its leadership over UNDP programmes increased accordingly.

UNDP's work in the Republic of Korea began with the rural development sector in the 1960s, shortly after Korea's post-war reconstruction. 'Issue Brief 1: Rural Development' provides a short summary on how UNDP contributed to enhancing the living standards of Korean farmers and fishermen who formed the majority of the population at that time. 'Issue Brief 2: Water Management' covers examples from UNDP's work in improving Korea's water management system in various forms, which was crucial for both urban and rural development. 'Issue Brief 3: Heavy and Chemical Industry' is a snapshot of UNDP's assistance in the establishment of the heavy and chemical industry, which became the backbone and a catalyst of Korea's rapid economic development since the end of the 1970s.



UN Photo/JC, 1969



UN Photo/JC, 1968

While economic development was the primary focus in the earlier decades, Korea started to pay more attention to social and environmental issues from the 1980s onwards. Accordingly, 'Issue Brief 4: Environment Protection' touches upon UNDP's efforts in tackling critical environmental problems, such as the high level of air pollution resulting from Korea's rapid economic development. Lastly, 'Issue 5: Social Development' recounts UNDP's support to social cohesion, promoting women empowerment and enhancing the capacities of marginalized groups, such as persons with disabilities.

In 2009, Korea joined the OECD-DAC, officially affirming its status as a contributor of development aid. Having completed its mission to support Korea in its development, UNDP closed its Country Office in the same year. Then in 2011, UNDP's presence in Korea was re-established in the form of the UNDP Seoul Policy Centre (USPC), with the new objective of brokering new partnerships between Korea and the developing world through UNDP networks. Co-funded by the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UNDP, USPC is now tasked with: representing UNDP in Korea, working with Korea on international issues, and sharing Korea's development experiences with other countries. As such, the story of UNDP's partnership with Korea continues to unfold today, now with Korea being a donor as well as a substantive partner in development cooperation.

In this historical context, we sincerely hope that this publication series will help recollect and share the history of UNDP-Korea partnership.

This series was produced by the UNDP Seoul Policy Centre for Global Development Partnerships. The publication has been possible because of the generous support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea to the Centre. For other issues of this series, please visit <http://www.undp.org/uspc>.

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UNDP in Korea

1966 - 2009



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1. Rural Development



Foundation-Building Work and Boosting Korea's Food Production in the 1960s and early 1970s

The Agricultural Industry

Agriculture was the backbone of the Korean economy in the 1960s with some 60% of the population living in rural areas. Yet, in the aftermath of the devastating Korean War, domestic agricultural production was not sufficient to meet the basic needs for staples such as rice, wheat, corn, and beans. As a result, Korea had to supplement with imported food supplies at high foreign currency costs. Increasing domestic food production was therefore set as the highest priority of the Korean Government.

In this context, UNDP undertook a number of research projects to inform policy making and helped set up various institutes specialized in agricultural production, soil research, water management and land reclamation. In some cases, this work was done jointly with FAO, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization.

The soil research conducted with UNDP's support during this period forms the basis of Korea's agricultural planning up until today.

1. Improving Soil Fertility

Key Programme: Soil Fertility Survey and Soil Research Programme (1963 - 1971)

In the early 1960s, Korean farmers were in dire need of advice on how to improve their soil management to optimize fertility and increase yields. They lacked knowledge of soil quality and how it could be improved. To meet this challenge, UNDP funded the establishment of a laboratory that conducted extensive field experiments with fertilizers and chemicals under various conditions. Working closely with the then Ministry of Agriculture, the main objective of this research was to produce reliable data.

With UNDP's research support, the Government produced guidelines on the use of fertilizers by major crop type, agricultural/ecological region and soil condition in order to raise the nation's soil productivity and crop yield.



UNDP (the then UN Special Fund) worked with the Korean government and the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) to increase agricultural productivity in Korea by conducting studies and practical demonstrations on soil management. Surveys and field experiments were launched in order to optimize the fertility level in cultivable areas and boost food production in Korea. (UN Photo/PB, 1964)

2. Nation-wide soil maps

Key Programme: Soil Survey (1964 - 1971)

In order to know what to grow where, or why some crops grow better here than there, farmers and their advisors would need information on different soil types. UNDP, FAO and the then Office of Rural Development therefore developed the first modern soil survey in Korea. It generated nation-wide soil maps of the geographical distribution of various soil types. The soil map database was then utilized to offer recommendations on the most effective land use as well as selection of suitable crop varieties. These nation-wide soil maps still constitute the foundation of today's internet-based soil information system of Korea.

The Fishery Industry

Key Programme: Deep-Sea Fishing Training Centre (1964)

The fishery sector served as another vital source of food supply in Korea. However, the supply of fish in the surrounding seas was insufficient to meet the growing local demand. To increase this important food supply, the Government and UNDP worked closely together to establish the Deep-Sea Fishing Training Centre.

UNDP provided assistance in setting up and operating this training centre to develop qualified deck officers, marine engineers and maritime radio operators by providing training courses for deck and engine parts. The deck training courses focused on basic fishing techniques, while the engine courses emphasized the maintenance, operation and repair of engines. With the initial successes of the Deep-Sea Fishing Training Centre, the Korean Government requested additional support from UNDP in training sailors for skipjack tuna fishing.



UN Photo/JC, 1967

Over the years, the Centre contributed to significant improvements in the living standards of Korean fishermen and helped the country's fishing industry to achieve impressive growth. More than 2,500 qualified sailors were trained during the period of 1968 to 1975. Eventually in 1975, the Korean Government revamped this

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training centre into a large-scale international cooperation hub for fisheries training, providing training courses to foreign trainees as well. Today, sailors trained at this centre are still sailing around the globe to further advance the Korean fishing industry.

Poverty Reduction and Urban-Rural Income Gap

Key Programme: Rural Vocational Preparation and Training Centre (1970 - 1972)

In the early 1970s, about 25% of Korean youth dropped out of primary and secondary school due to financial hardships. As a result, many young people did not reach the level of minimum education required for employment or even entry into a regular vocational training program.

In partnership with the Korean Government and other UN agencies, UNDP launched six rural vocational training centres (RVTCs) to enhance employment and earning potential for those who could not afford education in rural areas. The six centres trained out-of-school youth on practical trades, such as farm machinery and handicraft skills, applicable to the rural region.

Later, the six original centres were upgraded, and three additional centres were created. UNDP provided support through 24 months of advisory services and financial assistance. By 1975, these RVTCs produced a total of 5,213 graduates, and became a model for other centres in the country. They were later replicated in nine provinces.

In this sense, UNDP's support helped create productive employment opportunities for the poor and narrow the income gap between the urban and rural areas, which had widened after Korea's rapid industrialization process.

Main Rural Development Projects

KOR-09	Soil Fertility and Soil Research	KOR-10	Deep Sea Fishing Training Centre
KOR-13	Soil Survey	ROK-68-525	Coastal Fishing Training Centre- Skipjack Fishing
ROK-69	Fishery Advisory Services	ROK-69-009	Skipjack
ROK-70-011	Soil and Survey and Fertility Project	ROK-71-532	Strengthening Plant Protection Research & Training
ROK-71-533, 534	Disease and Insect Pest Control on Plants	ROK-73-005	Rural Vocational Preparation and Training
ROK-78-007	Agricultural Marketing Master Plan	ROK-82-015	Crop Insurance Training
ROK-84-003	Improving Agriculture and Production of Food through the Aid of Nuclear and Related Techniques	ROK-87-006	Strengthening of Rural Development Administration's (RDA) Plant Germplasm Resources
ROK-87-007	Strengthening of Plant Quarantine Capability	ROK-93-001	Integrated Pest Management Development & Training Program (Phase I)
ROK-95-004	Integrated Pest Management Development & Training Program (Phase II)	ROK-96-008	Integrated Pest Management Development & Training Program (Phase III)
ROK-98-006	An Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development (ESSD) Model of the Rural Farmland and Agricultural Resources in Taeho Agricultural Tideland	ROK-03-004	Development of Agricultural Production Framework in Pursuit of Food Safety, Quality and Environmental Sustainability

Learn More:

- Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. "The Republic of Korea and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)". 2010.
- "Major Cases of International Aid". Development Overview. KDI School of Public Policy and Management.
- Seok-Cheol Kim and others. "Integrated plant nutrient supply and management strategies to enhance nutrient use efficiency and crop productivity in Korea". Food & Fertilizer Technology Center for the Asian and Pacific Region (FFTC-ASPAC).
- UNDP and ILO. "Rural Vocational Preparation and Training (ROK/73/005): Project Findings and Recommendations". Geneva. 1976.
- "General Report 1967". United Nations Special Fund Korean Project for Soil Fertility Survey and Soil Research.

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UNDP in Korea 1966 - 2009



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2.

Water Management

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For any country, effective water management is a key component for development. In the 1960s-1970s, UNDP provided various support to Korea's water management efforts, particularly in the southeastern part of the country. It provided expert services, special equipment, and fellowships for the training of local personnel in modern techniques of soil and water management for projects in the Nakdong River Basin. UNDP also supported studies and projects that helped to enhance flood and drought damage control, and to improve the drainage systems for farmlands.



Village children and project trainees overlook a pond from which water is drawn to operate the sprinkler system for irrigating experimental farms. (UN Photo/M Guthrie, 1971)

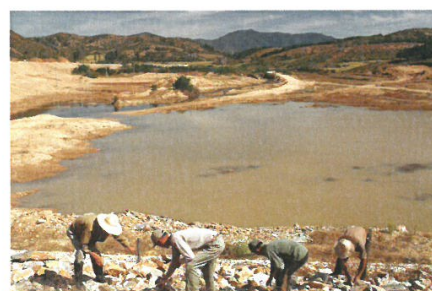
1. Development of the Nakdong River Basin

Key Programme: Pre-Investment Survey of the Nakdong River Basin (1965), Nakdong River Basin Delta Studies (1972)

The Nakdong River is the longest river in the country and passes through major cities such as Busan and Daegu. The river basin has served as a popular dwelling area and fed nearby inhabitants as a vital source of drinking water, fishing and irrigation. Effective management of the Nakdong River was important for Korea's development.

Therefore, in the mid-1960s, UNDP assisted in the pre-investment survey of the Nakdong River Basin, and helped to preserve, manage and develop water resources of the Basin. With the survey, the Korean Government obtained critical information on complex water management issues and used that information later to develop the irrigation and water supply system, sewage treatment facilities and flood control mechanisms.

In the early 1970s, UNDP supported the Nakdong River Basin Delta studies, and examined the economic and technical feasibility of establishing a separate organization to preside over water quality management in the Nakdong River Basin. The study included a review of key water issues in the lower parts of the Nakdong River, such as damage from sea water at the river mouth, countercurrents, eco-system concerns and water management for farming. These feasibility studies provided valuable input for the government's water management projects and irrigation systems development in particular, which were implemented as part of the country's Third Five-Year Economic Development Plan in 1972-1976. Ultimately, it contributed to flood and drought damage control in southeast Korea.



UN Photo/M Guthrie, 1971

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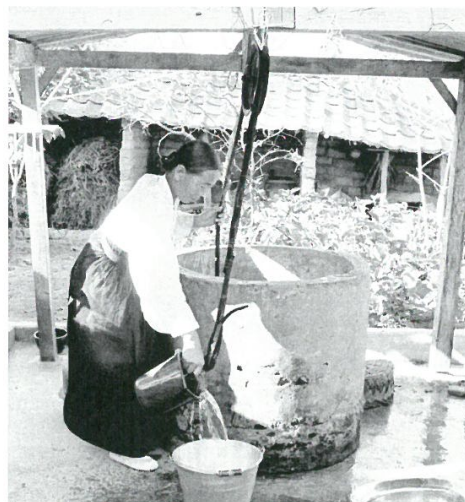
2. Improvement of Water Resources and Drainage Systems for Farmlands

Key Programmes: Uplands Development and Watershed Management (1967), Drainage Improvement (1975)

In 1967, UNDP, together with the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), assisted the Korean government in conducting technical studies of upland reservoirs to manage water resources for farmlands. The project covered a watershed area of approximately 100,000 hectares and tested the economic feasibility of introducing a comprehensive watershed development and management system for enhancing agricultural productivity.

With the global food crisis that hit the world in 1974, the Korean Government initiated farmland drainage improvement projects in order to increase Korea's crop production, particularly on rice-barley double cropping. Accordingly, UNDP supported the government to implement three sample drainage projects covering 2,000 to 4,000 hectares of land, between 1975 and 1978, utilizing the newly introduced construction technologies for modern drainage facilities.

These drainage projects contributed to the prevention of flooding, improvement of the soil-water environment for crop production in waterlogged areas, as well as increases in agricultural yield and land utilization in Korea.



UN Photo/M Guthrie, 1971

Main Water Management Projects

ROK-01-001	Development of Soil Loss Protection program in the Tumen River Basin	ROK-72-005	Nakdong River Basin Delta and Tributary Studies
ROK-66-516	Pre-Investment Survey of the Nakdong River Basin	ROK-72-006	Nakdong River Basin Delta Studies
ROK-67-523	Uplands Development and Watershed Management	ROK-75-005	Outdoor Hydraulics Laboratory
ROK-68-524	Tubwell Irrigation Project	ROK-75-006	Drainage Improvement
ROK-70-006	Fellowship in Water Works	ROK-82-014	Groundwater Resources Surveys
ROK-72-003	National Seminar on Water Management at Farm Level	ROK-93-014	Water and Marine Pollution Monitoring

Learn More:

- S. H. Yun. "Environmental Conditions for Rice Culture," in Rice Culture in Asia. Korean National Committee on Irrigation and Drainage. Available at [http://www.ekcid.org/down/4-4/rc\(9-6\)91-120.pdf](http://www.ekcid.org/down/4-4/rc(9-6)91-120.pdf).
- Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO). "A study of the Reasons for Success or Failure of Soil Conservation Projects", FAO Soils Bulletin 64. 1991. Available at <http://www.nzdl.org/gsdImod?e=d-00000-00---off-0aginfo--00-0----0-10-0---0---0direct-10---4-----0-11--11-en-50---20-about---00-0-1-00-0--4----0-0-11-10-0utfZz-8-00&a=d&cl=CL2.11&d=HASHc65b0fc3a139bb8d649ab8.10.2>.

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UNDP in Korea

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3. Development of Heavy and Chemical Industry

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While the manufacturing industry had become the backbone of the Korean economy, by the early 1970s, Korea was under pressure to shift away from a labor-intensive manufacturing economy, owing to rising trade protectionism from industrialized countries, soaring oil prices, and a real wage increase of domestic workers. In order to boost the country's export competitiveness, the Korean Government therefore sought to transform the country's development thrust and rigorously promoted the Heavy-Chemical Industry (HCI) Drive during the 1970s.

The focus was on technology-intensive sectors including steel, chemicals, nonferrous metal, machinery equipment, shipbuilding and electronics, which later became key components of Korea's export-oriented economy.

At the beginning, however, the Government faced a number of challenges, particularly the lack of skilled manpower and technology required for the successful development of HCI. In this context, UNDP's programmes in Korea focused on nurturing the "software" for the HCI development. It helped upgrade the country's human capital and assisted in technology innovation efforts, thereby contributing to the successes of the HCI Drive. Out of these successes, Korea reached the advanced stage of industrialization, and the rapid economic growth followed in this period.



The Korea Central Vocational Training Institute, established with UNDP support, facilitated Korea's technology innovations and produced skilled workers in the steel, chemical, ship building and electronics industries. Capacities built through the Institute assisted Korea's transition from a labor-intensive manufacturing economy into a more advanced economy by propelling the Heavy-Chemical Industry Drive (UN Photo/M Guthrie, 1971)

1. Development of Skilled Manpower

Key Programme: Central Vocational Training Institute (CVTI) (1968 – 1982)

The Central Vocational Training Institute (CVTI) was the first modern institution for vocational training in Korea, established in 1968 to create a national industrial vocational training scheme to foster skilled manpower needed for Korea's growing industries. The Centre was developed under the collective efforts of UNDP, the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the Office of Labour Affairs (OLA), an agency under the then Ministry of Health and Social Affairs.

UNDP supported the creation of CVTI by providing \$2.62 million in funds covering the costs of hiring experts as well as training and equipment expenses. Over the years, CVTI made important contributions in nurturing Korea's human capital. For instance, already in the first four years after its establishment (i.e. 1968-1972), CVTI completed:

- Delivery of 45 in-plant training programmes to a total of 3,069 trainees in 36 occupations;
- Production of more than 15,000 graduates of correspondence courses;
- Development of training methods and instructional aids for use in CVTI and other vocational training centres in Korea; and
- Capacity building of qualified instructors in six industrial occupations dispatched to other training centres.

During the second phase, initiated in 1974, CVTI implemented training programmes on two additional occupational skills: industrial electronics, and tool and die-making. The second stage also provided overseas training for the teachers to improve the quality of the teacher-training program. By 1982, the Institute had over 3,000 competent instructors. The effectiveness of the CVTI programme is evidenced by their trainees' achievements: at least 95% of the national skills qualification examinations entrants trained by CVTI instructors succeeded in acquiring a skill license, compared with 52% of those trained by other instructors.

Subsequently, CVTI became the country's leading vocational and teacher-training institution. The Korean industry and other vocational centres relied on CVTI for supply of qualified workers and instructors. Thus, through the multiplier effect of its training programs and its consultative role in creating additional vocational training centres in Korea, CVTI enhanced the quality and quantity of manpower required for the HCI Drive.

The Institute's legacy still continues today under the new name, Korea Polytechnics (KOPO), which is the only comprehensive technical vocational education and training college in Korea.

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2. Establishment of Institutions for Technological Advancement

The Shipbuilding Industry

Key Programme: Shipbuilding Industry Technical Services (SITS) (1974 - 1984)

Before the creation of the Shipbuilding Industry Technical Services (SITS) in 1974, Korea was in need of advanced shipbuilding technologies as well as skilled engineers and designers. SITS coordinated all of the research related to ship design, marine engineering and shipbuilding. UNDP injected \$2.04 million in financial support and provided advisors, oversees training sessions and equipment for SITS. This allowed SITS to bring together marine experts, retrain them, and send them to shipbuilding companies or relevant engineering university departments. UNDP also facilitated knowledge sharing for shipbuilding, welding and steel fabrication technologies between international experts and Korean peers.

With such assistance from UNDP, Korea enhanced shipbuilding technologies and skilled manpower. By the end of 1980s, the country became a major producer of ships, and by 2003 Korea became the number one shipbuilder in the world.



UN Photo/M Guthrie, 1971

The Semiconductor Industry

Key Programme: Semiconductor Technology Development Center (STDC) (1975 - 1977)

The now-famous Korean semiconductor sector was another key strategic industry nurtured by the HCI Drive in the 1970s. Here, UNDP helped launch the Semiconductor Technology Development Center (STDC) in 1975, which initiated the first domestic research on semiconductors design and manufacturing. The Center also developed and distributed integrated circuits and semiconductor devices to expand the Korean electronic industry. Then in 1977, STDC merged with a research department at the Korea Institute of Science and Technology (KIST) to form the Korea Institute of Electronics Technology (KIET). This institution played a key role in carrying out further research on integrated circuits and semiconductors used in Korea's consumer electronics and telecommunications products.

Assisted by UNDP, Korea's rigorous promotion of the semiconductor industry paved the way for rapid growth in the Korean semiconductor market. Over the years, the Republic of Korea has become one of the world's largest semiconductor manufacturer, accounting for 16.2% of the global semiconductor output in 2013. Today, Korean companies are among the top semiconductor companies worldwide in terms of revenue.

Main Heavy and Chemical Industry Projects

ROK-68-526	Central Vocational Training Institute (Phase I)	ROK-70-008	Electroplating & Metal Finishing Training & Consul
ROK-71-003	Petrochemical Industry	ROK-71-004	Iron and Steelmaking Industry
ROK-72-008	Central Vocational Training Institute (Phase II)	ROK-72-026	Shipbuilding Industry Technical Services
ROK-75-010	Shipbuilding Welding & Steel Fabrication	ROK-75-019	Semiconductor Materials Technology
ROK-77-006	Shipboard Machinery	ROK-82-020	Ship Production Technology
ROK-82-030	Surface Treatment Centre	ROK-82-031	Numerical Control Centre
ROK-86-002	Establishment of CAD Section within the Die & Moulds Department	ROK-89-004	Development and Industrial Application of Pitch-Based Carbon Fibre

Learn More:

- International Labour Organization. "Central Vocational Training Institute (ROK/68/526): Report on Project Results, Conclusions and Recommendations". Geneva. June 1973.
- UNDP and ILO. "National Centre Vocational Training Institute – Phase II (ROK/72/008): Project Findings and Recommendations". Geneva, 1982.
- Paige Tanner. "South Korea: Second Largest Global Semiconductor Manufacturer." All You Need to Know about the Global Semiconductor Industry.
- Market Realist, 10 Sept. 2015.

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Environmental
Protection

1960's

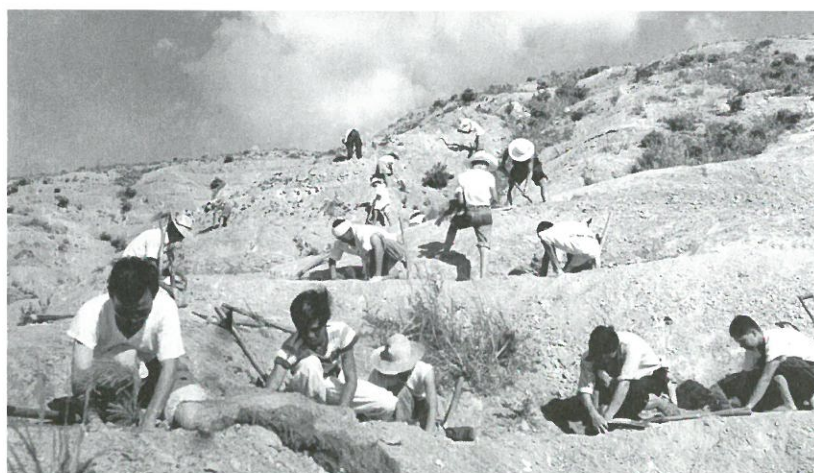
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People plant Korean red pine-tree seedlings on a hillside as part of a reforestation program. Indiscriminate cutting of forests during World War II and the Korean War, which destroyed more than a seventh of the trees, led to severe deforestation in Korea. (UN Photo/PB, 1954)

By the 1970s, rapid industrialization had led to serious environmental degradation in Korea. However, due to lack of experience on environmental issues, it was challenging for the Korean Government to effectively tackle these issues. In response, UNDP assisted Korean government officials in adopting better environmental policies and environmentally conscious approaches through various channels. For instance, UNDP's support nurtured Korean experts in the area of environmental protection and related technologies; created environmental databases, such as the air pollution database; established environmental monitoring and network systems; and supported capacity building for Korean officials and experts in selected areas, such as reforestation.

1. Nurturing Human Resources for Environmental Protection

Key Programmes: Environmental Improvement Fellowships (1974), Development and Training of Manpower for Environmental Pollution Control (1982)

In 1974, UNDP introduced "Environmental Improvement Fellowships" to provide two-year education and training for Korean talents who wished to become faculty members in educational institutions for urban landscape architecture. These individuals eventually became the core players pioneering and establishing the field in Korea. UNDP also provided short-term training support on environmental protection for policymakers.

However, in the 1970s, Korea's overall environmental challenges escalated with the accelerated industrialization and urbanization processes. In 1979, for instance, the level of sulfur dioxide exposure in Seoul exceeded the safe limit by over 400% and massive fish die-offs occurred frequently during the 1970s along the coasts of Ulsan, Masan and Jinhae. Therefore, in the early 1980s, UNDP and the World Health Organization (WHO) supported initiatives for human resources development at Korea's National Environmental Protection Institute (NEPI) through its "Development and Training of Manpower for Environmental Pollution Control" Programme.

With the objective of enhancing environmental pollution control, UNDP's support helped train personnel in charge of handling technologies for pollution control and imparted important skillsets to implement relevant policies. As a result, NEPI was able to develop advanced technologies in pollution survey, sample analysis and data processing, as well as manage the operation of pollution control facilities.



UN Photo/M Guthrie, 1971

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2. Establishing the Air Pollution Monitoring System

Key Programme: Air Pollution Monitoring (1974)

By the 1970s, air pollution became a serious issue in Korea's major cities. The government, nevertheless, lacked reliable and accurate information on the types of polluting substances and the distribution of air pollutant concentrations in major cities. They also lacked precise air quality measurement devices and databases that could assist in policymaking. Responding to this need, UNDP launched the "Air Pollution Monitoring" programme in 1974 to strengthen the capacities of organizations that monitored air quality throughout the country. UNDP's support helped the government secure reliable data on air pollution levels and develop effective policies and programs to control air pollution levels.



Visualm

3. Establishing the Environmental Assessment and Information Network

Key Programmes: Establishment of Environmental Toxicology Risk Assessment System (1993), Korea Environmental Information Network System (1993), Detailed Study & Proposal for ESSD in Northern Kyunggi Province (1996)

From the early 1990s, the government moved towards a more proactive approach in tackling environmental issues. Rather than handling environmental accidents after they occurred, such as eliminating perilous chemical substances after the discovery of environmental hazards, the government started to take preventive measures by assessing potential environmental risks of substances before manufacture and use. As a result, a law on controlling chemical and toxic substances was enacted in 1990. Nevertheless, there was still a great need for technical know-how to effectively enforce preventive management of chemical toxic wastes.



Visualm

Furthermore, the government was in need of accurate national data to better inform its policies and initiatives, as it had mainly utilized data generated from other countries and followed their standards. In particular, the government needed a systematic risk assessment process for preventive management of chemical toxic wastes, and called for national data on chemical toxicity and exposure.

In response, UNDP launched the "Establishment of Environmental Toxicological Risk Assessment System" to assist the Korean government in creating their own risk management system based on data collected locally, which led to the development of the Environmental Toxicological Risk Assessment (ETRA) process.

UNDP also supported the implementation of the "Korea Environmental Information Network System (KEINS)" which provided the government, NGOs and companies with enhanced access to data on environmental technologies and innovations. The information network developed through this programme eventually served as the foundation for East Asia's Environmental Network. In this context, the UNDP programme provided a meaningful opportunity for Korea to play a bridging role between developing and developed countries.

1990's

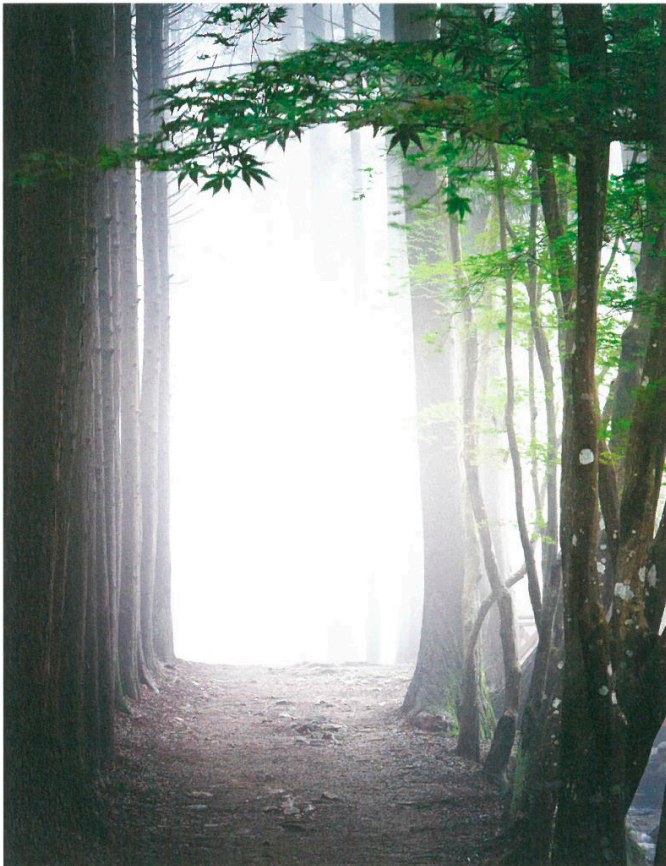
2000's

2010's

4. Creating the Foundation for Reforestation Efforts

Key Programmes: Forest Survey and Development (1967), Forest Training Center (1971), Long-Range Forestry Development Plan (1973)

In the early 1960s, forest areas accounted for 65% of Korea, with more than 50% of people living in rural and mountain villages. However, following over-exploitation during the Japanese annexation (1910-45) and the Korean War (1950-53), unrestricted use of forests as fuelwood and other uses aggravated the already barren and degraded forests. In the early 1960s, forest devastation rates exceeded 80% and the growing stock was less than 10m³/ha.



UNDP, 2015

UN photo/Kibae Park, 2011

In this context, UNDP supported Korea with the "Forest Survey and Development" programme which undertook a systematic investigation on forest resources for the purpose of developing forest resources, stabilizing soil, and improving river basins. An integrated field investigation covering over 1.7 million hectares was conducted, and its results allowed for systemic forestation implementation and erosion prevention.

Out of extensive and concerted efforts by the government and citizens, Korea became highly successful in reforestation. By 1982, the country was acclaimed as the only developing country that succeeded in reforestation after the Second World War by a UN FAO Report. The tree volume per ha increased 17.5 times from 5.6 per ha (1952) to 97.8 per ha (2007). In this context, UNDP's assistance helped create the scientific basis for Korea's successful reforestation efforts.

1960's

1970's

1980's

1990's

2000's

2010's

Main Environmental Protection Projects

ROK-74-001	Environmental Improvement Fellowships	ROK-03-G31	Conservation of Globally Significant Wetlands in the Republic of Korea
ROK-74-005	Air Pollution Monitoring	ROK-98-001	Environmentally Sound Tourism Development in the Tumen Region: Realizing the Potential of MT. Paekdusan/Changbaishan Area
ROK-77-005	Development & Training of Manpower-Environment Pollution	ROK-99-002	UNCHS Support Service to the International Symposium on Sustainable City Development: Creating a "Green City- Hanam": Collaborative Partnership for '99 Hanam Expo
ROK-79-002	Environmental Improvement Fellowship	ROK-67-523	Forestry Survey and Development
ROK-82-007	Development and Training of Manpower for Environmental Pollution Control	ROK-71-538	Forestry Training Centre
ROK-84-004	Assistance to Korea Environmental Technology Research Institute (KETRI)	ROK-73-008	Long-Range Forestry Development Plan
ROK-87-013	National Survey of Natural Ecosystems	ROK-75-001	Forestry Training Institute (Phase I)
ROK-90-002	Reduce Energy Consumption and Air Pollution in the Transportation Sector	ROK-82-001	Forestry Training Institute (Phase II)
ROK-93-013	Establishment of Environmental Toxicological Risk Assessment System	ROK-82-013	Productive Forest Resource Management
ROK-93-015	Water and Marine Pollution Monitoring	ROK-98-005	Development of Environmental Education Programmes on Trees and Forests
ROK-93-016	Korea Environmental Information Network System (KEINS)	ROK-82-028	Toxicology Research Laboratory
ROK-93-017	Model Ecopolis (Green City Concept)	ROK-89-003	Toxicology Research Centre (Phase II)
ROK-96-002	Development of Environmental Education Programmes for Community Based Organizations: Environment and Sustainable Human Development Linkage	ROK-75-003	Korea Institute of Energy Conservation
ROK-96-003	Development of Human Resources in the Korean Railroad Sector: With Emphasis on Environmentally Sound Management and Promotion of Women's Opportunity	ROK-82-029	Low Grade Coal Utilization & Property Analysis
ROK-96-007	Detailed Study and Proposal for ESSD in Northern Kyunggi Province	ROK-82-032	Studies on Radioactive Waste Treatment & Management
ROK-99-003	Creating a 'Green City-Hanam': Formulating Integrated Guidelines and Framework for Eco-City	ROK-86-004	Development of Coal Liquefaction Technology
		ROK-87-021	Energy Conservation Technology Development

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UNDP in Korea

1966 - 2009



5.

Social
Development

1960's 1970's 1980's 1990's 2000's 2010's

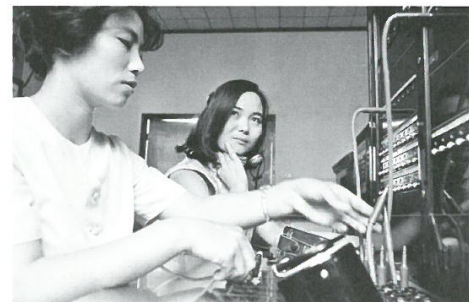
1. Support for the Disabled

Key Programmes: Vocational Rehabilitation for the Industrially Disabled (1974), Employment Promotion for Persons with Disabilities (1993)

Korea's rapid industrialization process coupled with inadequate attention to workplace safety led to a particularly high rate of industrial accidents in the country during the 1960s and 1970s. The Korean government requested the International Labour Office (ILO) to review the status of vocational rehabilitation programmes for victims of industrial accidents and offer recommendations for improving and expanding public services for victims in Korea. Thereafter, ILO sought assistance from UNDP to help the Korean Ministry of Labor in establishing and operating a new industrial rehabilitation center in Incheon City, while also assisting other ministries involved in vocational rehabilitation of the disabled.

The resulting Industrial Rehabilitation Center (IRC), founded in the mid-1970s, was the first in its field to be created in a developing Asian country. Combining medical and vocational rehabilitation, the center facilitated re-employment of the victims. Furthermore, the programme served to change Korean society's prejudice against 'disability' and led to the enactment of a national law that promoted the employment of workers with disabilities.

In 1990, the Korea Employment Promotion Agency for the Disabled (KEPAD) was established in order to accelerate efforts to enhance the self-sufficiency of disabled workers. Here, UNDP implemented a long-term collaborative program with KEPAD (1993-1998), and provided strategic support to the new agency in studying and benchmarking various employment promotion schemes of more developed countries. The findings were then used to assess and improve Korea's system in various ways. For instance, financial incentives and assistance were given to companies that faithfully complied with the government quota for the employment of the disabled. This new policy created employment opportunities for more than 10,000 disabled workers during this period.



Women receive vocational training as telephone operators at a simulated switchboard at the Telecommunications Training Centre in Seoul. (UN Photo/PB, 1968)

2. Enhancing Gender Equality

By the 1980s, Korea's rapid industrialization had brought about significant improvements in women's social status in Korea. Yet, gender equality remained a challenge in the country. While Korean women were not lagging in terms of education, life expectancy and literacy rate, significant gender gaps remained in political and economic spheres—such as women's political participation, employment opportunities and wages.

In this context, UNDP began its work in the late 1980s to support the promotion of gender equality in Korea. For instance, UNDP implemented a vocational training & income enhancement project for low-income women (1987) and hosted a conference on "Gender Equality in the Labor Market" in partnership with the Korean Women's Development Institute (1993). UNDP also supported a legal literacy training & leadership project for female labor union members (1994). For instance, it undertook a joint-review on the concept of 'gender equality' reflected in national laws and policies, and helped the activist groups in their legal advocacy work for the revision of laws- such as family law- with a perspective on gender equality. Afterwards, UNDP continued to partner with activist groups to support advocacy for women's rights. In 2007, UNDP implemented a project on gender-responsive budgeting and helped enhance the capacity of Korean government officials in gender-responsive planning and management of their budget.

3. Raising awareness on gender issues in Korea through coordination with the international community

Key Programmes: Training Programme to Promote International Cooperation Activity for Professional Women (1994), Support for NGO Preparatory Activities for Beijing World Conference on Women (1994)

In order to empower Korean female leaders, UNDP also facilitated international cooperation and global exchange on women's rights issues. UNDP's training

1960's

1970's

1980's

1990's

2000's

2010's

programs provided information on key international activities on women's issues, supported female leaders from various sectors of the economy to learn about the global trend of women's rights activism, and disseminated knowledge products to activist groups. As a result of these programs, more Korean women were inspired to partner with relevant international groups and engage in women's development issues.

In this context, UNDP specifically provided assistance to Korean female leaders for participation in the 4th World Conference on Women held in Beijing in September 1995. UNDP not only provided the necessary financial resources for participation but also supported Korean NGOs in their preparatory activities leading up to the Conference. The Beijing Conference was a historical meeting, which reaffirmed equal rights for men and women, emphasized women's rights to development, and called for the elimination of all forms of violence against women. With UNDP's support, Korean female leaders benefited from this important global meeting by sharing their perspectives, strategies and experiences with other women around the globe.



UN Photo/PB, 1964

Main Social Development Projects

ROK-87-011	Training for Low-Income Women	ROK-07-008	Capacity Building for Implementing Gender Responsive Budget in Korea
ROK-88-W01	A Development Project for Women	ROK-07-005	Mainstreaming Gender Perspective in ODA Policies and Programmes- A Strategy for Achieving MDGS
ROK-93-004	Annual National Conference on Women	ROK-73-005	Rural Vocational Preparation and Training
ROK-94-002	Agenda for Policy-Makers and Women's Groups Toward Gender Equality in the Korean Legal System	ROK-74-004	Vocational Rehabilitation Industrially Disabled
ROK-94-003	Training Program Promote International Cooperation Activity for Professional Women	ROK-82-W01	Vocational Training for Youth of the Lower Income
ROK-94-004	Support NGO Preparatory Activities for Beijing World Conference on Women	ROK-87-012	Development of Vocational Rehabilitation Services for Industrially-Disabled Workers
ROK-94-005	Project for Group Activities to Enhance Women's Participation	ROK-93-011	Employment Promotion for People with Disabilities
ROK-94-006	Legal Literacy Training Trade Union Women	ROK-93-018	NGO Activities Promoting Sustainable Development Network (SDN) Concept
ROK-97-004	Group Activities to Promote Gender Empowerment	ROK-96-009	National Human Development Report –ROK
ROK-98-002	Empowering Women as Full Development Partners in the Information Age	ROK-96-010	Current- Poverty Issues & Counter Policies in ROK
ROK-98-003	Development of Strategies to Address de Jure and de Facto Human Right Status of Korean Women: Violence Against Women	ROK-97-008	Model Set-up and Pilot Operation of Home Help Service Programmed for the Elderly in Korea
ROK-00-003	Situation Analysis of Women's Participation in Cyber Space	ROK-08-004	Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in Asia through Green Cooperatives
		ROK-08-006	Rehabilitation for the Sever Hearing-impaired inIndonesia

Learn More:

· International Labour Organization. "Vocational Rehabilitation of the Industrially Disabled (ROK/74/004): Project Findings and Recommendations." Geneva 1976.

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