



The role of NGOs for low-income groups in Korean society

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SUMMARY: *This paper describes the increasingly important role of NGOs within South Korea in demanding better conditions for low-income groups in urban areas, and the links that this new role has with the democratic movement of the 1980s and the Saemaul Undong movement that started in 1970. The paper focuses in particular on NGOs that opposed the government's large forced eviction programme in Seoul during the 1980s and early 1990s, and that have helped to promote changes in government housing policy towards an "enabling framework" rooted in democratic and participatory government structures. The paper also discusses new directions that NGOs are taking or need to take to become more effective.*

I. INTRODUCTION

IT IS NOT an overstatement to say that the 1990s was a period of enlightenment for the civil society movement in South Korea (hereafter Korea). In the 1980s, only a relatively small number of civil organizations emerged and it was only after the mid-1990s that their numbers proliferated; at present, the state of the nation's civil movement as a whole is spirited and flourishing.

During the 1980s, there was a coincidence of influences, namely:

- democratic pressure from the bottom up and some international donor pressure from the top down that demanded stronger support for community organizations, NGOs and participation, and that explicitly or implicitly supported the expansion of the human rights movement to include a consideration of the "right to housing"; and
- the development of the "enabling approach" within the Global Shelter Strategy.⁽¹⁾

In Korea, new shelter strategies have been quite successful in re-framing traditional policies in terms of the general objectives of the enabling approach; however, progress towards implementing these objectives has been weak.

Major civic groups in Korea are involved to some degree or another in the legal struggle by the poor, particularly in the field of housing and urban renewal projects. The number of groups basing housing-related struggles on legal arguments is growing rapidly, through a reliance both on constitutional law and on increasing reference to the international human rights standard which recognizes housing as a human right.

1. UNCHS (Habitat) (1990), *The Global Shelter Strategy to the Year 2000*, Nairobi, pages 14-15.

The objective of this paper is to explore the important role of NGOs in Korea and to analyze the valuable experience of the movement.

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT OF NGOs IN KOREA

a. Civil society within a Confucian tradition

THE ORIGIN AND development of the non-profit/non-governmental sector in the West is closely related to a tradition of liberal democracy. The Enlightenment gave birth to the ideal of the autonomous individual, free from any hierarchy or authority. An autonomous individual is not coerced by the will of others and is free of any fixed social role. Therefore, the development of citizenship in the West was the process whereby individuals found protection by liberating themselves from the illegitimate power or abuse of the privileged.

In Korea, however, it is an undeniable fact that modern society is deeply rooted in a tradition of Confucianism. Due to this influence, an individual is not identified separately from his or her particular role in society. The Western notion of an isolated, abstract individual or free, autonomous individual does not exist in Korean society.⁽²⁾ Confucian principles emphasize caring and communal reciprocity rather than the expression of one's rights, particularly in close relationships. This kind of relationship is based on social roles and differs from the Western-type relationship which is based on equality and the traditions of the Enlightenment.

Most existing studies of civil society or NGOs in Korea came out after the democratic movement of 1987, and they define Korean civil society in Western terms. They argue that various interest groups and voluntary associations play the role of arbiter between individuals and the state, and between the private and public sectors. The backdrop for the advent of a new political culture was the emergence of a professional class and a middle class as a result of a developing economy, which fostered a fledgling pluralistic social structure.⁽³⁾

b. Political turmoil and the democratic movement of 1987

Since the founding of the Republic of Korea in 1948, South Korea has developed within a climate of rapid political turmoil. The first Republic of Korea, led by Lee Sungman, collapsed after student unrest in 1960, and the Jang Myun regime which followed soon toppled after a military *coup d'état* in 1961. This military authoritarian regime held for 18 years, until President Park was killed by one of his top aides, the Director of Korea Intelligence Agency, on 26 October 1979. In 1980, the fifth Republic was established with a new military authoritarian government led by General Chun.

This new regime faced a serious political crisis with the so-called "June Uprising" (in 1987), a national movement and rally which sought the restoration of democracy. The Chun regime succumbed to citizens' demands for constitutional amendments which would allow direct presidential elections. This was an important transitional stage in the pursuit of political democracy in Korea, from a military authoritarian government towards a civil government.

2. Chan, Joseph (1997), "A Confucian perspective on human rights" in De Bary, Theodore and Tu Weiming (editors), *Confucianism and Human Rights*, Columbia University Press, New York; also Ko, Pyong-Ik (1996), *Tradition and Transformation of East Asian History*, Moonhak Kwa Jesung Sa, Seoul.

3. Han, Sang-Jin (1977), "The republic sphere and democracy in Korea", *Korea Journal* Vol 37, No 4, pages 38-97; also Chung, Chullhee (1997), "Social movement organizations and the June uprising", *Korea Journal* Vol 37, No 1, pages 81-97; and Lew, Seok-Choon and Chang, Mi-Hye (1998) "Functions and roles of the non-profit/non-governmental sector for Korean social development: the affective linkage group", *Korea Journal* Vol 38, No 4, pages 277-296.

In the late 1980s, political reforms and changes in Korea brought about similar changes to those caused by the collapse of military regimes in many developing countries in Asia and Africa. The 1980s was a period of great transformation in the democratization of political systems and in social development. In order to make the legal and administrative systems more democratic, Korea instituted various radical policy changes and several amendments to laws, which provided a basis for a new civic government in 1993.

Three main interactive factors influenced the changes in Korea's democratic process and political transformation in the 1980s, namely the state, political circles and civil society. The political democratization of Korea was initiated by bottom-up civil society movements and was influenced by interaction – including conflict, cooperation and compromise – with the political elite.

III. THE ROLE OF NGOS IN HELPING LOW-INCOME GROUPS

SOCIETY CAN BE divided into three sectors, namely the state, which has a coercive power; the market, which deals with the production and exchange of goods and services for the maximization of profit; and the voluntary sector, which seeks neither coercion nor profit. In this three-way model, the “non-profit/non-governmental” sector represents the voluntary sector.⁽⁴⁾ In Korean society, although the non-profit/non-governmental sector played a passive role under authoritarian rule, with recent trends in democratization close attention is being paid to the role of this sector in order to ascertain the response of the state to a more active NGO role.

The beginning of Korea's democratization in 1987, with the so-called “June Uprising”, was an historic moment in that political democracy in the past had always been sacrificed for the sake of economic growth. With the process of democratization, individual freedoms increased, including the freedom of expression, and this created an autonomous space where voluntary associations could be organized freely. Most existing NGOs or civil societies for the poor and for housing rights emerged after this time.

We will now take a closer look at civil movements for socioeconomic development which existed under the authoritarian regimes, and at housing movements for the poor which emerged after a civilian government took power.

a. Saemaul Undong

In 1970, a new community movement, Saemaul Undong,⁽⁵⁾ was initiated under the leadership of the late President Park, with its identifying slogan of “Let's improve our livelihood”. Saemaul Undong emphasized growth by highlighting and acting upon people's desire to be free of the shackles of poverty and to join the ranks of the well-to-do. The programme was sponsored by central government and was characterized by three basic principles, namely diligence, self-help and cooperation. It was meant to be the cornerstone of Korea's modernization, reforming and revitalizing the spiritual as well as the material orientation of the nation and of its people.

The principal motivation behind Saemaul Undong was economic. The strong commitment by late President Park, the then head of state, to erad-

4. Hall, John (editor) (1992), *Civil Society: Theory, History and Comparison*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

5. The term *Saemaul* was coined by combining *Sae*, which means “progressive renewal based on past experiences”, and *Maul*, which refers to “regional and social communities”. Thus, *Saemaul Undong* represents a continuous effort towards community renewal and modernization for a better future.

icate poverty was met by the general public's yearning for a life free of poverty. This, in turn, gave energy to the launching of Saemaul Undong, whose primary goal was to increase incomes. The movement was accepted as a breakthrough, based on confidence and optimism, in the campaign to escape from despair and frustration.

The Saemaul movement started in rural areas, then moved to the towns and the metropolitan cities.⁽⁶⁾ It emphasized environmental improvement, increases in personal income and a reform of national values. In the urban areas, however, Saemaul Undong showed little success in improving housing conditions in slum and squatter settlements. It tried to change urban citizens' way of thinking, especially encouraging self-support and voluntary participation in the movement, and did not concentrate on slum and squatter upgrading. In the initial stages, the movement embarked upon various projects in four different places: job sites, local districts, homes and schools, with the motto, "diligence, frugality, neighbourhood association and cooperation".⁽⁷⁾ In its later stages, the movement tried to help not only establish a sound set of values based on citizens' morality and the public good but also build up a philosophy of life based on principles and public morale. Various actions were taken in order to establish an orderly, pure and dignified urban environment. For example, there were efforts to persuade people to obey traffic rules, to pick up waste paper, to use refined language and to observe good manners.

In residential areas, however, especially in slums, the Saemaul movement made some practical improvements, for example, environmental improvements, pavements, tree-planting and the cleaning up of sewage. But four main problems hindered the urban Saemaul movement in its efforts to upgrade settlements by means of self-help. First, it is difficult to persuade residents to cooperate with each other, or to control them, because of the characteristics of urban society. Second, progress is slow because of the complex interests of the citizens and because they foresee no quick return in terms of dollars and cents. Third, the urban Saemaul movement has less experience than the rural Saemaul movement. Fourth, the fundamental weakness of Saemaul Undong is that, from the outset, it lacked strong and well-defined legitimacy, which meant that in the initial stages it was inevitably characterized by a series of trials and errors. More importantly, it failed to earn the trust of younger citizens due to the prevalent distrust and misunderstanding that there was a political agenda behind the campaign.

Its status as a government-initiated movement was the source of a great deal of negative perception and criticism, and an effort was made to leave behind the old mentality, conventions and systems so that the movement could build an horizontal, cooperative partnership in place of a government-dependent campaign.

In the early 1980s, the urban Saemaul Undong, then reborn as a non-governmental movement, changed direction by setting itself the goal of advancing and preparing citizens' mind sets for an advanced industrial society. Representative projects during this period included three civil campaigns, which concerned reducing consumption, assisting and protecting the disadvantaged, and mutual cooperation. Activities included collecting recyclable waste; trading used goods; identifying and circulating ideas for reducing consumption; controlling street environments; voluntary services to reduce theft and vandalism; and energizing small-scale unofficial village councils called *pansanghoe*.

The essence of non-governmental organizations in Western civil soci-

6. In rural areas, the Saemaul movement helped the farmers to recognize that the modernization of agriculture demanded cooperation between farmers; and indeed, the agricultural sector has grown quickly since Saemaul Undong began. But perhaps more important has been its impact on the morale of the people. The movement has had far-reaching positive effects throughout the Korean countryside. Whether willingly and harmoniously or not, farmers have worked together to improve local roads, bridges and the facilities for dwellings; see Ban, S W, P Y Moon and D H Perkins (1980), *Rural Development: Studies in the Modernization of the Republic of Korea, 1945-1975*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, page 277.

7. Ministry of Home Affairs (1981), *History of Saemaul Undong*, Seoul, 1981.

eties lies in a time-honoured tradition of voluntary participation, moving beyond the confrontations within governments, markets and citizens. In developing countries, on the other hand, national economies have been weak, with little or no capital to support social welfare policies. Accordingly, the NGOs in these countries followed one of two different paths, either leading anti-government movements and aligning themselves with anti-establishment political movements, or acting to supplement the functions of weak public welfare systems by developing close relations with the government, based on mutual interests. With respect to the experiences and achievements of Saemaul Undong, the movement has contributed to supplementing the functions of weak public welfare systems and government tasks.

Towards the end of the 1980s, sweeping changes took place in Korea, resulting in an increase in democracy. This brought about an explosive growth in non-governmental and non-profit civil movements which, in turn, dictated the need for Saemaul Undong to improve its mechanism and structures. Because Saemaul Undong was initiated by the government in an era when the nation's economic growth was led by the government, some still regard it as a quasi-government-organized movement. Such misunderstandings must be clarified, through the creation of an autonomous, independent organization. As a civil movement, Saemaul Undong has not focused on criticism, monitoring and the filing of formal complaints with government authorities, activities which typical civil movements in Korea have tended to undertake in the last two decades.

b. Housing movements for low-income groups

Housing movements in Korea can be categorized either as residents' movements or as intellectual movements.⁽⁸⁾ Residents' movements in Seoul have been spontaneous, the result of abruptly mobilized residents' groups, and well-known examples of these are the squatter associations in the Sanggedong and Mokdong redevelopment areas. In contrast to residents' movements, intellectual movements are represented by religious organizations and NGOs, particularly the Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice (CCEJ).

There are several CBOs and NGOs in Korea which deal with evictions and low-income housing. These include the Federation of Evicted People of Seoul (FEPS); the Federation of National Street Vendors (FNSV); the Korean Coalition for Housing Rights (KCHR); the Korea Centre for City and Environment Research (KOCER); the Catholic Organization of the Urban Poor; the Pastoral Committee for the Urban Poor; the Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice (CCEJ); and the Korea National Association of the Urban Poor.

We will look first at the historical background of CCEJ, one of the influential NGOs in Korea. CCEJ was founded in 1989 by some 500 people representing various walks of life, including economics professors and other specialists, lawyers, housewives, students, young adults and business people. Their slogan, "*Let's achieve economic justice through citizens' power*", reflected their belief that the deep-rooted economic injustices that existed could not be cured by government alone but, ultimately, must be solved by the organized power of citizens. They believed that the fruits of economic development should be shared by all the common people and not just by the small group of "haves", and they proposed a new method-

8. Kim, Man-jae (1992), "The state, housing producers and housing consumers in Tokyo and Seoul", unpublished PhD thesis, Brown University.

ology of gradual but thorough reform of the economic system.

Before CCEJ came into being, there was no organization to point out the structural problems in the Korean economy and to engage citizens in a movement for economic reform. There was, however, a base of critical consciousness which had developed as a result of the people's resistance to three decades of military dictatorship. It was this awareness, brought into focus during the nationwide demonstrations of June 1987, that turned the nation towards civilian political rule.

CCEJ's achievements so far in terms of low-income housing include a campaign for secure housing for tenants and a campaign for secure housing for 15,000 households living in "vinyl huts", which demanded that the government stop evicting people from their dwelling places without offering them proper compensation, and proposed alternative policies. Typically, vinyl huts were constructed of layers of thin wooden board with an exterior vinyl covering. The CCEJ urban poor council and housing committee held public fora and undertook various types of action, such as a rally in front of the national government office to demand secure housing for the urban poor.

In addition, the CCEJ Urban Reform Centre was established to deal comprehensively with urban problems, in recognition of the need for continuous, cooperative efforts by civil society in the reform of urban policies and systems. The Urban Reform Movement strives to make cities into healthy and good places to live, based on a sustainable, environmentally friendly lifestyle. The Urban College offers a lecture course for citizens, run by the CCEJ Urban Reform Centre, whose objective is to extend the base of the Urban Reform Movement and educate civil movement leaders. It discusses broad and practical issues such as land use, safety, housing, transportation and village-making. The Urban College offers lectures to everybody and has a different approach to these subjects from regular colleges and universities in that it guides urban residents towards a correct understanding of urban problems and into taking action that will make their cities better places to live.

Since the mid-1980s, anti-eviction campaigns have been the main housing movement for NGOs and CBOs in Korea, with the aim of trying to stop the brutal evictions, particularly in urban redevelopment project areas. Millions of poor people, called squatters in most quarters, have been evicted during the past two decades in Seoul, often violently.⁽⁹⁾ Governments usually justify evictions in two ways: as a drive to "beautify" or "improve" the city, and for "redevelopment". If settlements are judged to be illegal – even if they have existed for many years – these form convenient excuses to bulldoze them with no compensation paid to former tenants, and landowners or developers can make very large profits from redevelopment projects. The most fundamental problem with slum redevelopment projects is that they completely isolate and marginalize the tenants,⁽¹⁰⁾ the logic being that "...tenants own neither the land nor the houses so they are not qualified to make any demands in terms of their rights." Some renting families have refused to leave, in the hope of gaining more bargaining power for their move out. Those who cannot move find that rents in nearby areas have already risen two- to three-fold as demolition approaches. It becomes impossible for them to go anywhere and they decide to resist the demolition.

To evict resisting tenants by force, the homeowners' associations and construction companies employ eviction agencies. The hired gangsters or thugs move into the districts and create an atmosphere of violence and

9. In Seoul, 700,000 squatters were evicted between 1985 and 1988. For instance, a major eviction programme took place in Seoul prior to the 1988 Olympics: see UNCHS (1996), *An Urbanizing World: Global Report on Human Settlements*, Oxford University Press, New York, page 245; also Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (1989), *Battle for Housing Rights in Korea*, Bangkok.

10. Renters usually form 50-60 per cent of the population in redevelopment areas in Seoul.

11. The case of Haengdang-2 Dong in Seoul from October 22 to November 22, 1993 was a typical forced eviction. Hired thugs attacked using baseball bats and steel pipes. Some tenants were injured and their clothes torn and ripped: see Ha, Seong-Kyu (2001), "Sub-standard settlements and joint redevelopment projects in Seoul", *Habitat International* Vol 25, No 3, pages 385-397.

12. See reference 9, Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (1989), page 1.

13. Murphy, Denis and Minar Pimple (1995), *Eviction Watch Asia*, ACHR, Bangkok, page 52.

fear by their abusive language and threatening gestures.⁽¹¹⁾ Korea was listed, along with South Africa, as one of the two countries in the world where forceful evictions are most brutal and inhuman.⁽¹²⁾

In urban Korea, particularly in Seoul, urban renewal (through the Joint Redevelopment Project) has systematically demolished sub-standard housing in areas where the urban poor are concentrated, thereby isolating and marginalizing the displaced tenants. Urban redevelopment projects are basically profit-oriented and view housing as a commodity on the open market. They are intended to make profits for the developers rather than improve the quality of life of the residents and no consideration is given to questions of social welfare or the total urban system.

In July 1987, the Federation of Evicted People of Seoul (FEPS), or *Sochollyop*, was organized by groups of people with experience of eviction in redevelopment project areas. FEPS's objectives are to assist one another in eviction cases, solve other common problems and lobby government to promulgate policies that would solve the problems of the urban poor. In the late 1980s, resisting renters from different areas began to show some solidarity. The main issues raised by renters and CBOs were their right to form their own interest group and a demand to ban forced evictions. In several redevelopment project areas, renters became organized enough to put up fierce resistance to the thugs hired to evict them.

NGO, CBO and renter anti-eviction movements have achieved some results. The Asian Coalition for Housing Rights noted that:

"On the macro level, the character of the evictees movement is a struggle with capital over the use of residential space. This means that the struggle must be waged not within the land or housing market but on other turf. Demand for public rental housing is such a turf, as it is a struggle for comprehensive solutions to the housing problem. But on the micro level, the movement has the character of getting renters to achieve better housing for themselves. At this level, the movement has the best chance of success, since the renters' potential gains and losses are most clear. The micro level of the movement has had much more success than the macro level."⁽¹³⁾

The ACHR campaign's main impact was that it gave great momentum to NGO and CBO organizing and to strengthening NGO activities in low-income housing issues, especially anti-eviction movements. Since the ACHR campaign in the late 1980s, the Korean Coalition for Housing Rights (KCHR) has been established, in line with low-income housing movements.

The KCHR and several NGOs urged the government to stop the demolition of existing low-income houses in view of the scarcity of affordable shelter. They have organized many rallies and public fora strongly opposing government policies toward low-income housing and redevelopment. Urban-poor NGOs are still asking the government to provide temporary shelter and social housing for tenants in redevelopment project areas.

The Korean Centre for City and Environment Research (KOCER) works in a number of slums in Seoul. It promotes a systematic method of training community organizers to uplift the downtrodden by helping to build the poor's organization for power through an ongoing issue-solving process. The community action division of KOCER conducts research on community-based civil movements. It also maintains close contact with organizations which defend and promote housing rights and the occupational rights of street vendors, construction day-labourers and other poor workers.

The Korean NGOs and CBOs forum for Habitat II was established in

October 1995. The goals of the forum were to promote public awareness of Habitat II, to establish housing rights for citizens and to bring the Local Agenda 21 to the community. The forum actively participated in the Habitat II NGO conference in Istanbul, Turkey from May 30 to June 12, 1996, and consisted of 15 NGOs and CBOs, including KCHR, CCEJ and PSED (People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy).

In view of the wide-scale violation of housing rights as a result of forced evictions in Korea, it was unanimously proposed that Korea be targeted for the first of ACHR's regional action plan projects. (ACHR is the regional organization of Habitat International Coalition, which is recognized by the United Nations as the world's leading non-governmental housing body.) An ACHR team, which included housing experts, parliamentarians and officials from several countries, visited Seoul on the eve of the 1988 Olympics and its report was critical of the government's housing policies. A fact-finding mission is an information-gathering as well as a social process, requiring the participation and cooperation of many individuals and organizations. The team suggested the following:⁽¹⁴⁾

- people should not be evicted until permanent alternative housing is organized or, at least, temporary housing provided;
- it would be helpful if ordinary people could participate more fully in the planning and implementation of programmes that affect them; and
- more use of community upgrading programmes in poor areas would allow all those who wish to remain in the area to do so.

As a result of continuous efforts and campaigns by NGOs and CBOs to improve the low-income housing situation, the government has been trying to realize the two aims of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlement development. In order to fulfill the public's role in the provision of adequate housing, the government proposed national minimum housing standards in 1999 and is now examining the number of households that do not meet these standards, through the general census conducted at the end of 2000. To clarify the government's responsibilities for housing policy and to ensure that various housing-related regulations achieve their objectives, the enactment of the Framework Act on Sheltering is being planned in such a way that sheltering objectives such as minimum housing standards and housing rights can be integrated for efficiency. When the Framework Act on Sheltering is enacted, all existing housing-related regulations will need to be amended in general, and there will be calls for an in-depth review of the necessity and possibilities for such changes.

In September 1999, the National Basic Living Guarantee Act was legislated to replace the Protection of Minimum Living Standard Act. This meant switching from a simple benefit and protection of living system to a welfare measure that reinforces the country's responsibility towards its lower-income classes. In cases of grants for shelter, a fixed amount proportional to household size will be given to help with rent until 2002. Under the Act, shelter grants that used to be included in living expenses are now given as separate payments. This is important in that it now means that a minimum for guaranteeing basic shelter and living has been put in place. It is anticipated that repair and maintenance costs will be given as cash in the early stages. Under the circumstances, it is difficult to expect shelter grants to improve the housing situation.

14. Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (1990), *Urban Poor Housing Rights in South Korea and Hong Kong*, ACHR, Bangkok, pages 42-44.

IV. LESSONS LEARNED AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

a. Problems of NGO and CBO action movements

FROM THE ABOVE discussions, some key points can be elicited. First, it is important that NGOs and CBOs continue to explore ways of developing a more efficient working process in order to maximize grassroots participation and ensure that NGOs can participate in and support the grassroots struggle more actively. Some NGOs, particularly the CCEJ, need to re-emphasize their role as an accessible platform for grassroots activities as well as for those of NGOs and professionals.⁽¹⁵⁾

Second, Korean NGOs and CBOs need to organize programmes of international networking with overseas NGOs and CBOs, the purpose of which is to search for more reasonable and sound policy alternatives and to induce reform in Korean society.

Third, the primary goal of NGOs and CBOs involved in housing rights of changing laws and systems in society is not sufficient in itself. Ultimately, it should be accompanied by the restoration of moral values which overcome greed and egoism, and the building of a sharing society.

Fourth, NGOs and CBOs must be linked horizontally and vertically into member-accountable structures that give the poor an effective voice in local and national policy action. This allows urban redevelopment to emerge as people-centred development, by promoting a true social movement. The role of NGOs and CBOs in Korea is being questioned, as they are seemingly ill-equipped and ill-prepared to meet the requirements of a bottom-up approach.

Finally, the residents and the CBOs have gone beyond merely fighting and have set up a movement striving for legal and institutional change. The urban-poor community leaders have raised questions and highlighted problems with the housing movement. These include:

- an unclear concept of housing rights;
- becoming lodged in an eviction-resistance movement and being unable to broaden out into a housing rights movement;
- divisions, both within the neighbourhoods and between the eviction-resistance organizations;
- no clear policy covering the course of the movement once the residents have achieved their aim of moving into temporary on-site housing;
- the lack of an effective political arm, and a lack of sophistication and flexibility that would allow compromise with the government; and
- insufficient solidarity with other social movements.⁽¹⁶⁾

b. Future directions

In the Korean context, since the 1990s the enabling approach has been much more important than other approaches in terms of the role of NGOs, CBOs and voluntary agencies. One of the main reasons why the emerging paradigm of the enabling approach seems so attractive is that it not only conforms with, but also requires, democratic participation. Moving from "controlling" to "facilitating", from "providing" to "enabling" and from "giving" to "empowering" is a timely attitudinal change.

The role of government was redefined to focus on managing the legal, regulatory and economic framework so that people, NGOs, CBOs and private-sector actors were more able to produce housing and related serv-

15. The CCEJ is one of the large influential NGOs in Korea but its activities and movements tend to be elite and professional-oriented, lacking grassroots support and participation.

16. Park, Moon-Su (1995), "Reflections, perspectives and challenges to people's movements", report on a workshop organized by the ACHR Korea Committee, February, page 22.

ices more effectively.

In many countries, NGOs have succeeded in identifying the successful "ingredients" of credit programmes for housing and neighbourhood development but they lack the capital to provide opportunities for low-income communities on a large scale. Although development from an NGO initiative to a government programme often takes a long time, a national fund does offer advantages to both government and NGOs. It allows the former to draw on models that have been successful in implementing effective housing credit and neighbourhood improvement programmes, that also make maximum use of the communities' own capacity to invest, build and organize; and for NGOs, it offers a way of taking their programmes to scale.

The enabling approach is associated with political reforms, especially democratization, and popular participation and decentralization now receive more official support than they used to. Civil society is also given a much greater role through NGOs, CBOs and citizens' movements. The "enabling framework" developed in response to housing problems and the failure of conventional public-sector responses.

With respect to the Korean experience of urban redevelopment and community movements, the following measures form the basis of the enabling process for NGOs and a community-based approach, and should be enhanced:

- the active participation of NGOs and CBOs at all levels in order to ensure legal security of tenure, protection from discrimination and access to affordable housing for low-income residents;
- the willingness to recognize and learn from errors;
- the extent to which local knowledge and perspectives are incorporated;
- the creation or maintenance of conditions and situations which help to maximize, whenever and wherever possible, the internal and external linkages experienced by a neighbourhood's residents;
- the willingness of planners to work with both community-based organizations and NGOs as well as with residents if they are interested in promoting notions of community empowerment and community regeneration; and
- transmission of experience from one stage to the next through experienced staff and communities.

V. CONCLUSIONS

THERE IS A growing awareness that excessive concern with economic development as the remedy for problems of under-development in Korea has overshadowed the sociocultural basis of development. The belief was that economic development would also promote the development of other sectors, including sociopolitical ones.

This way of thinking has been, at best, a half-truth. The sad story of the development experience in Korea has been that the benefits of economic growth have been distributed in accordance with the existing unequal social structure. Those belonging to the elite, who have both economic and political power, have received the benefits. The have-nots got little, if anything.

NGOs and CBOS are trying to correct many of the problems of redevelopment law. To this end, they have formed a committee to promote national-assembly action and have presented to the national assembly a

proposal for a modified redevelopment and housing law. They have also broadened their demands to include several other aspects of social welfare and social security which the government has not yet adequately covered.

In Korea, NGOs have emerged as critical intermediary institutions, supporting citizens' organizations to obtain access to resources and to negotiate with local government and other state institutions. NGOs either helped form community organizations in the areas in which they were active or they responded to the needs of existing citizen groups. To ensure legal security of tenure, protection from discrimination and equal access to adequate, affordable housing for all, active participation of NGOs and CBOs at all levels needs to be strengthened.

The "enabling framework" is developing in response to housing problems and the failure of conventional public-sector responses. The emphasis on "enabling approaches" has received considerable support from the growing recognition that democratic and participatory government structures are not only important goals of development but are also important means for achieving such development.