

# **WHAT WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND IN ORDER TO DESIGN INCLUSIVE RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

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This paper analyzes the various approaches to rural development through a study of rural programs since 1945. In order to understand the complexities facing rural development, this paper argues that it is vital to know how biasness toward industrialization and urbanization has continually contributed to the weakening of rural economics and societies. It then outlines the different programs for rural development that have been designed and carried out by governments and NGOs, such as the top-down approach, Integrated Rural Development (IRD) and Participatory Rural Development (PRD). Based on the study of these various programs, this paper concludes with policy suggestions on what should be addressed in order to design a program for inclusive rural development.

## **Introduction**

Global wealth has increased from \$195 trillion in 2010, to over \$231 trillion in 2011. Far from equal, however, the majority of this wealth is concentrated in urban centers throughout developed and developing countries that are anchored by industry and service sectors, as opposed to the rural that is centered on agriculture.<sup>1</sup> The growing inequality between the urban and rural has gained significant attention over the years as stories and statistics about rural life have highlighted the multiple challenges faced by rural inhabitants. According to the 2011 report of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), close to a billion people in rural areas live on less than a \$1.25 a day.<sup>2</sup> The scarcity of resources for many farmers and rural entrepreneurs—evident by ninety percent of the rural poor in developing countries unable to

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access basic financial services—mightily contributes to poor economic conditions in the rural sector of developing countries. In addition to encountering poor infrastructure and lacking access to basic education and health services, a significant number of rural inhabitants live in extreme ecological conditions that threaten their livelihoods and well-being.<sup>3</sup> As rural inhabitants face severe economic problems and living conditions, rural aid and public spending on agriculture has declined over the years.<sup>4</sup> Despite poverty existing everywhere, Lennart Bage, the former president of the IFAD, stressed that today “poverty is still largely a rural phenomenon.”<sup>5</sup>

Rural residents in developing countries have pursued their own initiatives to forge stable economic conditions and improve their daily lives; while governments, institutions such as the UN and World Bank, and NGOs have aided these efforts by contributing money and resources. Strengthening the rural economy and enhancing the quality of life in the countryside have been vital processes in the face of rural poverty continually diminishing the well-being of rural inhabitants and causing inequality and instability that has led to social conflict and violence.

### **Context and Policy Problem**

Several political, economic, social and cultural factors have contributed to the weakening of rural economies and societies in many developing countries. Among these factors, it appears that prejudices against agriculture and rural life have left them in a disadvantaged and poor state over the years. These prejudices became prominent during the industrial revolution in the West starting in the middle of the eighteenth century. As businessmen and entrepreneurs applied technological innovations such as the cotton spinning wheel and steam engines toward refining and advancing the manufacturing industry, debates ensued over whether agriculture or industry/manufacturing was the real source of wealth for a country and the most promising means to achieve national prosperity. Arguing against French physiocrats who had articulated a

popular theory that wealth only comes from agriculture and the labor of farmers, Adam Smith stressed that the many components of manufacturing, especially the division of labor and the increased productivity of finished goods, combined to produce a significant amount of wealth for society.<sup>6</sup> Smith's ideas not only confirmed manufacturing, industrial production and the labor of workers as sources of wealth, but also configured them as essential features for producing wealth for countries. Politicians, economists and intellectuals in Europe and the United States during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries followed Smith's footsteps by stressing the productive power of machines, factories and factory labor over agriculture. In early America, for example, debates raged between supporters of Thomas Jefferson's belief that agriculture and rural life anchored by the yeoman farmer offered the ideal means for economically wealthy and prosperous America and those who sided with Alexander Hamilton's vision of an America rooted in industry. Tench Coxe, who helped write Alexander Hamilton's *Report on Manufactures of 1791*, favored manufacturing over agriculture because it would not only increase economic gains and private wealth through the production and selling of industrial goods, but also preserve America's independence because Americans would no longer be dependent on foreign manufactured goods. Individuals like Smith and Coxe never rejected agriculture, but they interpreted manufacturing and industry as *the* means for increasing economic productivity. For them, agriculture had limited value and diminishing returns whereas manufacturing and industry afforded more means to enlarge personal and national wealth.

As economic theories deemphasized agriculture as *the* central feature for building a robust economy, eighteenth and nineteenth century intellectual trends emphasized the urban as the ideal space for modern living. As people poured into cities in search of manufacturing and industrial jobs, writers and philosophers characterized urban life as dynamic. To them, the city

featured new institutions, attractions and forms of consumption and entertainment that afforded exciting opportunities and experiences. Charles Baudelaire proclaimed that the city was “a spree of vitality” and a fast-paced world of “feverish joys.”<sup>7</sup> The city was seen as more than just a place to find work and earn money, but also where the diverse social and cultural character of urban life enhanced people’s senses and incited imagination; in effect, it was a place where consciousness was enhanced and identities reshaped. In particular, well-known political discourses from the left to the right stressed that urban life supplied the conditions and opportunities to reach the highest stages of humanity. Indeed, for Karl Marx, close interaction between workers in a modern factory would enable the creation of a collective class consciousness through which they would recognize the conditions of oppression and mobilize a revolutionary movement. Peasants, however, would be unable to form a collective consciousness from which to recognize their grievances and organize toward political liberation because they worked apart from each other.<sup>8</sup>

These opinions and interpretations of industrialization and urbanization ultimately grounded narratives of modern development, such as Civilization and Enlightenment discourse, during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These narratives called for individuals to transition from an agricultural and rural-based life to a life centered on industry and urban living in order to experience “positive” changes and enlightenment and thus become “modern.” In so doing, they turned industry and the city into symbols of “progress” and “good” while agriculture and the country symbolized “backwardness” and “bad.” Capturing and guiding the imagination of people inside and outside the West, these symbols caused a general trend of people interpreting agriculture and rural living as obstacles for development and governments shifting attention and resources away from the countryside. As imperialism and colonialism spread these

narratives of modern development, several non-Western countries accepted them as “truths” and rejected their agrarian heritages. Many political leaders and intellectuals in China, Japan and Korea, for example, embraced industry and urban life over their existing agrarian and rural-based societies because they believed that they were the sole means through which to become a powerful modern nation-state and feared the loss of independence if they failed to initiate reforms. In 1910, Korea ultimately lost its independence to Japan who declared that it needed to “help” Koreans become modern by severing the country’s ties to an agrarian past and promoting industrialization and urbanization.

These narratives of modern development wielded significant influence over societies because their ideas were embodied in political, economic, social and cultural reforms. Laws and structures materialized these ideas in people’s daily lives and continually reinforced the belief that industrial production and urbanization were far more advantageous to a society than agriculture and rural living. This effect extended into the Cold War era through new narratives of modern development, including modernization theory, that simply repackaged traditional messages about rural versus urban development. These narratives emphasized that “capital and labour were perceived to be more productive in industry where economics of scale and external economics prevailed, rather than in agriculture which was subject to diminishing returns.”<sup>9</sup> Quantitative and qualitative data and theories on economic development, such as export pessimism, supplied the “facts” to support the arguments in these narratives and caused agriculture to be known as a static industry.<sup>10</sup> The robust development of economies that were formerly agrarian-based, such as the Soviet Union’s economy, was perceived to be further proof that industrialization enabled unimpeded economic growth.<sup>11</sup>

As narratives, data and theories fueled drives for industrialization in left and right-leaning countries throughout the world, several developing countries devoted capital and resources toward industrial development and realigned the agrarian economy in ways to support industrialization. In countries such as Argentina and Turkey, governments enacted various measures to protect domestic industries that ultimately harmed agricultural sectors, including overvaluing the real exchange rate, pushing down the price of agricultural goods through direct procurement programs and placing high taxes on agricultural exports.<sup>12</sup> In particular, governments kept agricultural prices low in order to push down industrial wages and avoid protests over food costs by the rapidly expanding urban population. These indirect and direct measures against agriculture, according to Maurice Schiff and Alberto Valdès, represented forms of taxation that amounted to almost thirty percent for agricultural cultivators.<sup>13</sup>

After the communist revolution in 1949, Chinese officials pursued an industrial first policy in spite of Mao's public declaration that agriculture, the rural, and peasants were the pillars of the revolution. Like Marx, Lenin and Stalin, Mao saw the embodiment of socialism, "in large, vertically organized, capital-intensive industrial complexes located overwhelmingly in cities, complexes whose production and other activities were tightly controlled by the bureaucratic decisions of planners."<sup>14</sup> The countryside was an important resource for achieving industrial-based socialism through the supply of low-cost agricultural goods for both consumption by urban dwellers and for export in which the earned revenue funded industrial programs and the acquisition of technological innovations. In this quest to industrialize, the government provided more benefits to urban residents than rural inhabitants, such as secured jobs, housing, and education.<sup>15</sup> After 1980, the government feverishly pushed forward its industrial-based plan of development, which resulted in the continued discrimination against the

rural sector that can be seen in the government's tacit approval of illegal seizures of fertile farming lands for industrial development and its failure to provide adequate social and health benefits for rural residents.

In the early 1960s, South Korea inaugurated its own industrial first policy when Park Chung Hee, the authoritarian ruler, ushered in reforms that expanded the manufacturing industry and gave birth to a period of fast-paced urbanization. Following the suggestions of U.S. advisors who supported modernization theory and his own study of the Japanese industrialization policies in colonial Korea, Park anchored his industrial and urban policy on a program of "labour-intensive manufactured exports-led growth" that was centered in cities. This program's success was based upon the "squeezing of the agricultural sector" through several initiatives, especially the direct procurement of rice and agricultural goods that lowered the wages and wealth of farmers by keeping down agricultural prices. Low prices on agricultural goods kept labor costs down by reducing "the reproduction costs and thus wage levels for the industrial labour force" and indirectly exerting a "downward market pressure on urban wage rates" by providing a constant supply of cheap laborers who were fleeing from the poor economic conditions in rural Korea.<sup>16</sup> As an industrial power today, South Korea continues to protect and advance its industrial sector at the expense of the agrarian sector by agreeing to remove protective measures for farmers and the agricultural industry in order for *chaebols*, industrial conglomerates like Hyundai and Samsung, to gain export markets through WTO and IMF reforms. Farmers and rural inhabitants today are also facing the loss of valuable lands because of projects promoting industrial and urban expansion, such as the Four Rivers Restoration Project.<sup>17</sup> Over the past thirty years, over one million acres of farming land have been lost to industrial and urban projects.<sup>18</sup>

Despite studies showing that agriculture is conducive to economic growth, agricultural taxation slowed the economy of developing countries and costs for urban residents actually rose because of government procurement programs.<sup>19</sup> Economists and politicians still argue that industrialization and urbanization are essential for developing a thriving economy and society. A 2011 World Bank report on rural-urban transition in developing countries, for example, stresses that urbanization is essential, if not an inevitable process, for development.<sup>20</sup> Present-day ideas and narratives on development continue to give normative status to industrialization and urbanization and configure them as symbols of prosperity and progress. As long as institutions, structures, and reforms embody these norms and shape people's perceptions on what is the appropriate path of development, biasness against agriculture and the rural will persist.

### **Policy Options**

Despite an industrial and urban bias, governments in developing countries after 1945, could never totally disregard agrarian and rural affairs. To political leaders and government officials, agriculture was a vital component for industrialization and urbanization, and therefore, disturbances and instability in the countryside threatened peace and security in the country and endangered plans of national development. Fears over rural instability and unrest increased in many developing Asian countries as farmers and rural residents protested over their impoverished conditions and the growing inequality between the country and city. The need for stability thus motivated a number of developing countries to inaugurate rural movements. In many cases, these rural movements were supported by worldwide organizations, like the World Bank, which began to pay more attention to rural affairs as a response to criticisms that they overlooked the plight of rural residents who represented the greatest percentage of the world's population. Besides responding to criticisms, spending more time and resources to solving



problems of the rural poor became a high priority for these organizations because of the “revolutionary potential of poor peasants.”<sup>21</sup> In other words, over the threat of them becoming active participants in leftist revolutions during the Cold War. Today in places such as China and Afghanistan, governments and organizations still seek to contain any rural unrest from spilling over into other areas and threatening the entire country’s political, economic and social stability.

Since the 1950s, there have been several approaches to tackling rural poverty and stabilizing the countryside that can be classified under three categories: top-down, holistic and participatory development. The top-down approach is a process in which the state imposes its developmental program on local communities and closely monitors and controls everything. The state has the sole responsibility to determine the content and direction of agrarian and rural reforms because it is a rational entity that is informed and guided by modern scientific and technical knowledge. “High Modernism” informs the logic of the top-down approach, which, according to James Scott, “at its center was a supreme self-confidence about continued linear progress, the development of scientific and technical knowledge, the expansions of production, the rational design of social order, the growing satisfaction of human needs, and, not least, an increasing control over nature (including human nature) commensurate with scientific understanding of natural laws.”<sup>22</sup> In short, top-down movements seek to extinguish traditional and “backwards” aspects of the agricultural economy and rural life through modernization.

From 1967 to the early 1980s, the Tanzanian government conducted a top-down rural movement to establish “fixed, permanent settlements” and promote “forms of agriculture that would yield a greater marketable surplus, especially for export.”<sup>23</sup> The government, under the leadership of Julius Nyerere, saw in the movement a way to not only modernize agriculture, but also to establish an ideal political order anchored by socialist cooperatives that emphasized

collective labor and living. In 1973, Nyerere ordered a forced settlement policy that required rural residents to leave their homes and their traditional networks for newly created villages (*ujamaa*) that included private and communal plots. Basing their decisions on modern science and technology, government officials also ordered residents of the new villages to give up the traditional practice of polycropping (raising multiple crops on a single plot of land) for a form of monocropping that featured a single type of cash crop that was determined by agricultural experts. At the same time Nyerere embarked on his rural movement, Park Chung-hee, the authoritarian South Korean president, started the New Village Movement (*Saemaul undong*) in 1971, with the purpose of alleviating rural poverty, bridging the inequality gap between the urban and rural, and reestablishing his influence over farmers through the modernization of the countryside.<sup>24</sup> In this movement, the central government carried out various programs, such as infrastructure projects that included the construction of roads, agricultural initiatives that involved authorities distributing new strains of seeds and types of fertilizer, and political indoctrination classes where villagers were taught how to “improve” their lives. Programs were initiated and controlled by government officials who ordered farmers to grow certain types of crops, especially high-yielding rice varieties, and renovate their homes, such as removing thatched roofs and installing painted tiles, for the sake of modernization. Like Tanzanian government officials, authorities in the New Village Movement attributed the decline of rural society to the “traditional” habits and outlook of its residents. Both movements stressed that their conservative nature and resistance to change caused their predicaments.<sup>25</sup> Consequently, each movement believed the modernization of the countryside required close supervision and coercion.

The Tanzanian rural movement and the New Village Movement resulted in failure.

In Tanzania, the government imported large amounts of food between 1973 and 1975 because agricultural production became dangerously low due to severe problems in the movement. Because programs and initiatives under the New Village Movement created an artificial price structure for agriculture during the 1970s that temporarily raised the price of goods such as rice, the average farm household real disposable income declined and the rural-urban income gap widened after the South Korean government dismantled the pricing system and shifted its attention and resources to other sectors of the economy in the 1980s.<sup>26</sup> Farmers and rural residents in both countries resented and rejected the coercive nature of the movements, especially being ordered what to plant and told how to live a proper modern life, which led to the further erosion of trust and cooperation between the government and people.<sup>27</sup> Both governments' unwillingness to collaborate with rural residents served as one of the main reasons why their movements failed. Government officials refused to consult with rural residents, listen to their problems and solicit their advice. In so doing, they disregarded local knowledge and culture that would have helped to develop successful programs that were appropriate to the build and natural environments of rural inhabitants. Farmers in Tanzania and South Korea possessed the expert knowledge on what was needed to enhance rural life, such as growing traditional varieties of crops, polycropping and relying on traditional networks for help, and both governments had the resources to help farmers achieve their goals. Being only about intervention and control, both movements, however, refused to respect the autonomy and expertise of rural residents.

As governments continued to adopt the top-down approach despite its problems, rural experts and NGOs designed alternative rural programs of development that emphasized a holistic approach to improving rural life. This model of rural development first appeared in the late 1950s, but gained more prominence after agricultural experts and government officials formally

named and articulated this model as Integrated Rural Development (IRD) at the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) sponsored symposium on “Agricultural Institutions for Integrated Rural Development” in 1971, and the World Bank pledged to support IRD projects in 1973. IRD featured a “multi-input development approach,” which “implies that activities within different sectors are interlinked in order to achieve a more integrated and sustainable development.”<sup>28</sup> Architects of IRD argued that strengthening agricultural production and safeguarding rural welfare required a “package of reinforcing activities applied to a particular area.”<sup>29</sup> Moreover, they stressed the need for local input and participation in IRD projects.

Some of the well-known IRD projects included Vicos (Peru, 1952); Comilla (Bangladesh, 1959); Cadu (Ethiopia, 1967) and Puebla (Mexico, 1967); Bicol River (Philippines, 1975); Helmand Valley (Afghanistan, 1975) and Invierno (Nicaragua, 1975).<sup>30</sup> Each project carried out a wide range of tasks that covered every aspect of the agrarian economy and rural life, such as infrastructure projects to improve roads, canals and irrigation systems, classes on farming, the establishment of cooperatives, introducing new systems of credit and finance, literacy classes, and health and family planning programs. As each task in an IRD project reinforced one another, project designers expected the overall well-being of rural communities to improve and that the active participation of residents would sustain these improvements.

Overall, the record of IRD projects was full of mixed results. The Comilla and Vicos projects enhanced agricultural productivity and rural welfare. Both projects invested heavily in working with the local residents to develop comprehensive plans that met the needs of the communities while the Vicos project, in particular, secured land rights for the Peruvian Indians and strengthened local governance through the dismantling of the *hacienda* system. Yet despite these successful examples and the fact that the IRD was more democratic and transparent than

the top-down approach to rural development, IRD projects encountered several problems. First, certain IRD projects experienced significant setbacks because of unresolved issues of land tenure. Because secured land rights for farmers prevented arbitrary evictions and provided long-term security, a successful rural movement required the resolving of land tenure problems—a process that took place in Vicos. Large landowners in Cadu, for example, evicted tenant farmers, after the landowners adopted many of the IRD suggestions and mechanized their farms. Second, some IRD projects failed to consult residents during the planning stages of the projects and paid little attention to local details, thus leading to poorly conceived IRD designs. For example, surveying and planning for the Cadu project involved little input from residents while project leaders in Invierno who were all from the Harvard Business School never consulted with local residents during the planning stage of the project. Third, rural residents and villages lacked the means and mechanisms to control and influence outside forces. When the Ministry of Agriculture persuaded Vicos residents to take out a loan to purchase dairy cows, but gave them poor quality animals, residents had no way or power to renegotiate the loan and therefore simply returned the animals. In so doing, they defaulted on the loan and ruined their credit rating. Vicos and other projects like it showed how rural residents were vulnerable to forces and influences outside of their local communities; they had control over the happenings and developments in local places like the village, but they had little influence and power over occurrences and decisions determined outside of their immediate surroundings. Fifth, there were criticisms over the inflexibility of IRD designs in that they allowed little room for adjustments when implemented.<sup>31</sup> Finally, many IRD projects had experienced coordination “nightmares” in trying to get agencies and organizations to work together to provide resources and guidance.

The number of IRD projects in developing countries peaked by the early 1980s. Although certain organizations today, such as the Norwegian Afghanistan Committee and the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, continue to structure their projects around IRD principles, newer designs for rural development have arisen. Architects of rural development created these new designs with the intention of fixing the problems in the top-down approach and IRD projects. In particular, these designs try to get residents more involved in projects and gain a sense of ownership over them—two problems that appeared in IRD projects as a result of outside experts being too involved in projects and rural residents overly relying on them for guidance.<sup>32</sup> “Participatory Rural Development (PRD)” specifically seeks to address the problems of participation and ownership.<sup>33</sup> PRD projects hope to increase participation and ownership by expecting community members to define project objectives and control the processes to achieve targeted outcomes. Experts still offer advice and guidance, but decision-making powers and supervising responsibilities lie entirely in the hands of community members.

The IFAD currently carries out a vast number of PRD-based projects throughout the developing world. In Zanzibar, for example, IFAD helped to create Farmer’s Field Schools where participants determine their specific needs, create a curriculum to meet those needs and has farmers themselves teach the curriculum.<sup>34</sup> PRD-based projects are most prominent in Afghanistan. Started by the Afghan government in 2003, with the assistance of facilitating partners (FP), such as CARE and Oxfam, the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) embodies the principles of PRD. The NSP’s mandate is to “implement community-supported development programs in nearly every Afghan village” by providing a block grant of up to \$60,000 for villages with over fifty families. In order to receive a grant, the village must elect a council that oversees the funds, decides with all village members what projects to pursue and supervises the

carrying out of the project. Some of the more successful NSP projects include villagers working together to construct a road leading out of their village that would connect it to outside areas and give them access to various services. In Char Kaburtarkhan, villagers used \$60,000 toward building a new school and a number of culverts and repairing the village's public bath. Several villages have reported that NSP projects have fostered stronger communities by establishing formal structures through which to discuss village needs and address conflicts.<sup>35</sup>

In evaluating PRD-based projects, there appears to be two issues that threaten the sustainability of these projects. First, in Afghanistan, problems over land tenure and rights, which is considered one of the largest economic and social problems in that country, could derail any rural development project because unresolved land issues lead to more uncertainty and instability. Second, there also appears to be strong level of distrust between local people and the central government in Afghanistan that could ruin any collaborative approach to rural development. Third, in both IFAD and NSP projects, many farmers and rural entrepreneurs face the problem of how to access and be linked to larger domestic and international markets in terms of not only gaining the resources to finance these linkages, but also developing the proper infrastructure to transport goods and foster relationships with outside producers and consumers.

### **Policy Points**

Weak agricultural economies and rural poverty continue to plague many developing countries because rural communities not only lack economic opportunities, proper infrastructure and basic social services, but also face the erosion of valuable cultural customs and institutions that had long provided guidance and security. Rural residents today are confronted with many of the same political, economic, social and cultural problems that have crippled development in the past, such as bias against agriculture and rural life, but they also face complex environments that

pose several new challenges. Indeed, significant parts of the rural population today are tied to the fast-paced, demanding globalized capitalist economy that has presented opportunities as well as threatening political and financial changes that have been difficult to negotiate and control. Moreover, drastic climatic transformations have created fragile ecological conditions that threaten basic farming and rural livelihoods. Designing strategies for securing, strengthening and sustaining rural livelihoods and communities therefore must address long-standing problems and these new challenges. In order to do so, here are a few points to keep in mind.

**First**, in terms of security, a rural development program should address land tenure issues. For many rural inhabitants, land is the essential source for an economic livelihood because it provides the essential means and resources, such as foodstuff, to sustain daily living. Historically, the absence of landownership or secure tenancy rights has resulted in a tenuous existence for farmers and rural residents because of their vulnerability to the decision-making power of landlords who could evict tenants on a whim. This lack of control over land has often led to the loss of livelihood and security for the farmer, which was evident in the Cadu project. In addition to deeply affecting a farmer's economic livelihood, the absence of landownership has shown to limit the autonomy of farmers and rural residents. In East Asian countries, tenancy historically not only involved farmers giving a portion of their harvested crops as rent, but also required them to perform non-agricultural services for landowners. In most cases, tenants had no choice but to perform these services out of fears of being evicted, which occurred frequently in 1920s and 1930s Korea. As shown in the Vicos project, tenant farmers have been able to break this uneven power relationship with landowners and regain their autonomy after gaining the ownership of land. Finally, unresolved land tenure issues have often led to forms of inequity and economic and social polarization in rural societies because of the concentration of landownership



by wealthy and powerful interests—a problem particularly acute in present-day Afghanistan.<sup>36</sup> Initiatives to expand landowning, secure tenancy rights and clarify landowning records, such as those adopted by South Korean authorities after 1953, have shown to resolve land tenure problems and to help quell disputes and rural unrests—two serious issues threatening political stability in China today. Settling land problem enables fundamental security for rural residents. Without it, uncertainty and insecurity would disrupt any rural development program.

**Second**, as a way to strengthen rural economies and communities, development programs should design organizational resources to pool the labor and resources of individuals in order to foster a strong collective force through which to enhance economic power and assert influence over trends, developments and policies that have a direct impact on rural affairs. One of the largest obstacles to improving the economic situation of farmers and rural residents is the scarcity of organization and resources toward adequately dealing with the forces and institutions of capitalism, especially in the area of finance. Since the 1950s, cooperatives in South Korea have proven to be effective and powerful mechanisms that have strengthened the economic powers of farmers. By collaboratively marketing and selling agricultural goods and livestock directly to consumers, marketing cooperatives, in particular, have allowed Korean farmers to gain stable and fair incomes through the maximization of resources and lowered costs by sidestepping intermediaries between the producer and consumer. Founded in 1986, Hansalim (Save All Living Things), for example, has flourished in South Korea with over 280,000 consumer cooperative members, 2,000 farmers, 328 employees and over 131 stores with over \$162 million in sales (2010). Under Hansalim's cooperative system, farmers streamline their costs by sharing the labor and responsibility to distribute their goods and sell them at cooperative stores that are located in urban centers, such as Seoul and Pusan. Urban residents who pay a

small fee to be a member of the cooperative enjoy several benefits, including the opportunity to purchase agricultural goods, especially organic foodstuff, at prices lower than grocery stores.

Hansalim has been extremely beneficial for farmers and rural residents on several levels. Economically, the cooperative has created a production and distribution system for farmers that has expanded the market for their goods and their economic opportunities. Through the cooperative's elaborate infrastructure and networks, which no farmer alone could construct and sustain, cooperative farmers are able to sell their goods in cities and export them to China and Japan. Socially, the cooperative has strengthened ties between farmers and urban residents. Through Hansalim's cooperatives, visiting farm programs and educational projects, urban consumers have become more aware of and interested in rural affairs and development. Politically, Hansalim has fostered relationships with NGOs throughout the world in order to promote the interests of rural residents and environmental policies to government and policy makers who have often made important decisions on agrarian and rural affairs without their input. Its own research institute has continually issued policies on sustainable rural development and lobbied on behalf of its members at the national and international levels. In effect, Hansalim has enabled farmers to compete with large-scale agricultural corporations and has provided members with the means to participate and shape processes that directly influence their livelihoods.<sup>37</sup>

In today's globalizing capitalist economy, farmers and rural residents in developing countries need various organizational resources, which include civic associations, to promote and protect their interests. Presently, important financial decisions and trends that play significant roles in determining rural events and settings, such as commodity prices and the flow of capital, are being made by global institutions. Moreover, trade policies that directly shape the way farmers should approach present and future planning, such as WTO and IMF reforms on tariffs

and agricultural subsidies, are being determined by international institutions that are located far from developing rural areas. Besides these institutions, most rural residents still encounter national political settings that give them little room to voice their interests and opinions about rural policies. For example, because rural residents in China today are severely underrepresented in formal organizations, such as the People's Congress and the Communist Party, they are left with few means to influence policies and programs.<sup>38</sup> More than ever, it is imperative to establish economic, political and social networks through organizational resources in order to give rural locales the power to assert their influences over national and global affairs. Without them, rural residents face the further erosion of their autonomy and control over their lives.

**Third**, alongside organization resources, programs for rural development should include innovative designs in the field of architecture and contemporary design in order to enhance and strengthen built environments. Rural development programs commonly rely on large-scale initiatives for achieving targeted outcomes, but these initiatives have often been carried out for a long period of time, which has therefore delayed any results. Small-scale architectural design projects, such as the simple renovations of homes and the construction of public spaces, have often been carried out in a short amount of time and achieved immediate results of stabilizing and strengthening people's daily lives. Samuel Mockbee, a well-regarded architect and winner of a MacArthur "Genius Grant," designed and built a number of small-scale architectural projects in rural Alabama through his firm *Rural Studio*. His contemporary-based approach to architectural design values local culture and is cost effective because it creatively uses inexpensive materials including "beat-up railroad ties, old brick, donated lumber, hay bales, baled corrugated cardboard...and road signs."<sup>39</sup> Mockbee's designs have been credited with improving the physical health and mental outlook of rural folk through simple renovations, such as installing

basic plumbing and walking ramps for the disabled and constructing simple public spaces where community-developing activities have taken place.<sup>40</sup> The Kounkuey Design Initiative (KDI) also has conducted small-scale design initiatives that emphasize low-cost and local community participation. In Bonneau, a rural town in Haiti, KDI has collaborated with community members to build a new market area, which will serve as a multi-functioning “Productive Public Space” where community members can buy and sell goods and take business and agricultural training classes. Contemporary design objects have also proven to have an immediate, positive impact on rural communities. The Watercone, which desalinates saltwater through a sunshine-condensation process, has been credited with giving people immediate access to drinkable water while the LifeStraw has lowered the number of cases of diarrhea and waterborne diseases in rural communities by treating contaminated water. The BioLite HomeStove, a low-cost biomass cookstove, has been extremely beneficial for families in developing rural areas. The stove produces little smoke and carbon monoxide, thus limiting deaths due to indoor smoke inhalation and reducing carbon emissions. Its innovative design also allows the generation of enough power to recharge devices like cell phones, which benefits people who lack electricity.<sup>41</sup>

Architectural projects and design objects have not only achieved an immediate impact at little cost, but they also have supplied creative ways to tackle serious rural problems that threaten the daily existence of rural residents. Moreover, many of them have proven to be effective in advancing environmental sustainability—a significant issue for rural communities living in fragile natural environments. Changes resulting from the construction of new spaces and the application of design objects are far from the large-scale changes seen in major projects, such as building a dam or establishing a cooperative, but they have enhanced the quality of people’s

everyday lives. Carrying out small and large-scale initiatives simultaneously then allows for a comprehensive approach to rural development that addresses both micro and macro issues.

**Fourth**, in order to sustain rural communities, rural development programs should address youth migration from the countryside. Rural towns rely on the younger generation to assume various responsibilities as the older generation retires and to carry on cultural heritages in order to uphold communities. Yet, historically, developing countries undergoing a process of industrialization and urbanization have encountered a trend of young people leaving the countryside in search of new economic opportunities and cultural experiences in cities. Industrialization and urbanization in Japan and South Korea, for example, gave way to a mass exodus of young people from the country to the city—resulting in many towns today left with an aging population who are saddled with numerous responsibilities and extreme financial burdens and thus on the verge of collapse.<sup>42</sup> Throughout the developing world, rural youth commonly consider agriculture and rural life as premodern and antiquated and industry and cities as modern and progressive. To ensure the continual participation of rural youth in local affairs, the IFAD has funded projects that specifically give rural youth vast educational opportunities, advanced agricultural training and access to vital resources, especially in the area of finance. It has also funded conferences and created networks for promoting rural entrepreneurship.<sup>43</sup> Additional ways to entice youth to stay in the countryside may lie in the development of rural industries that offer diverse economic opportunities and the construction of cultural institutions that promote contemporary trends and developments. Overall, it is imperative to take rural youth discontent and restlessness seriously and provide them with options because no program can be sustained over time without their continual involvement.

## **Conclusion**

Currently, interest in rural affairs and development has grown dramatically throughout the world in the last decade. Interestingly enough, increased discussions over rural development are a result of growing uneasiness over urbanization and industrialization. In the aftermath of the 2010 devastating earthquake in Haiti, for example, government officials and development experts pushed for the “decentralization” of the country by relocating urban residents to the countryside and reviving the agricultural industry. They argued that their plans would provide food security for the country and solve the problems of urbanization, such as overcrowding, mass poverty and violence.<sup>44</sup> In developed countries, such as the United States, Greece and South Korea, there has been resurgence in urban dwellers returning to the countryside and taking up farming or running a cottage industry.<sup>45</sup> This development, which is frequently labeled the “back to land” movement, is a result of urbanites becoming dissatisfied with industrialization and seeking “ideal” living conditions by fleeing polluted and congested cities.

Planners and experts on rural development should take advantage of this moment to further discussions on overcoming the rural and urban divide and to bring attention to the problems faced by rural residents in developing countries. In so doing, they should steer dialogue on rural development away from anything that romanticizes the rural, which is common in today’s “back to land” movement. A trend founded in reaction to industrialization and urbanization, the romanticization of the rural emphasizes not only farming as a noble profession because agriculture is the source for living and wealth, but also the country as the ideal space for a healthy life because of its natural surroundings. Because of their connection to nature, both farming and the country have been typically characterized as “authentic,” unlike industry and the city, which have been depicted as “artificial.” Agrarianists, who typically have been behind

romanticizing the rural, have sought to preserve and protect the rural as a sanctuary from the harms and ill effects of industrial and urban living by rejecting any changes or forms of development in the country. Aiding rural residents cannot be accomplished through the idealization of the rural and the rejection of all changes for these options only unfairly dictate a way life and overly presume that preventing changes can be achieved easily under globalization.

Industrialization, urbanization and even globalization will continue to dominate narratives of development. The challenge for designing inclusive rural development lies in establishing a type of development that carefully positions rural inhabitants to make shrewd adjustments and changes and gives them the means to negotiate this reality. The nature and speed of change, or even the desire for little or no change, of course, should be decided through an open, transparent process in which community members, especially women, collaboratively define their values and needs, articulate the desired objectives of projects and programs and decide the means to achieve the targeted outcomes.<sup>46</sup> Only when community members take the lead in constructing and carrying out programs and projects, with experts and policy makers solely providing help and advice, can there be the beginning of an inclusive rural development.

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<sup>1</sup> According to reports from the United Nations and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), there are no established conventions toward defining “developing” and “developed.” In standard practice, however, “Japan in Asia, Canada and the United States in northern America, Australia and New Zealand in Oceania, and Europe are considered “developed” regions or areas.” See <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49regin.htm>

<sup>2</sup> International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), *Annual Report 2011* (Rome, Italy: International Fund for Agricultural Development, 2012), 5

<sup>3</sup> Close to 70 percent of IFAD projects are located in “ecologically fragile, marginal environments.” Ibid., 9

<sup>4</sup> With the exception of Asia, public spending on agriculture relative to GDP has declined in many developing regions. Moreover, external commitments and assistances to agriculture has steadily declined since the 1980s. See Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, *Trends in Sustainable Development: Agriculture, Rural Development, Land, Desertification and Drought* (New York: United Nations, 2008), 4.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>6</sup> Nicholas Phillipson, *Adam Smith: An Enlightened Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), ch. 9, 10 and 11.

<sup>7</sup> Raymond Williams, *The City and the Country* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 234-235.

<sup>8</sup> Bruce Cumings, *Origins of the Korean War, Vol. I* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 62.

<sup>9</sup> *World Agriculture: Towards 2010, An FAO Study*. Nikos Alexandratos, ed. (Chichester: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and John Wiley and Sons, 1995) 259.

<sup>10</sup> Alongside export pessimism, many economists had argued that agricultural production and exports was “unresponsive to prices” and did not “respond to incentives.” Ibid., 259 and 261.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 259.

<sup>12</sup> Maurice Schiff and Alberto Vades, *The Plundering of Agriculture in Developing Countries* (Washington D.C.: The World Bank, 1992), 5.

<sup>13</sup> These taxes that protected domestic industry “hurt agriculture by raising the domestic price of importable agricultural inputs above world prices, by reducing the purchasing power of farms households as consumers of manufactured goods, and by causing further appreciation of the real exchange rate.” Ibid., 5.

<sup>14</sup> Martin King Whyte, “The Paradoxes of Rural-Urban Inequality in Contemporary China,” *One Country, Two Societies*. Martin King Whyte, ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 9

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>16</sup> Mick Moore, “Mobilization and Disillusion in Rural Korea,” *Pacific Affairs Winter* (1984-1985): 583.

<sup>17</sup> The Four Rivers Restoration Project is project to restore river banks in order to create lands for new industrial and urban projects. New dams and irrigation systems has dried out fertile farming lands while cities have evicted farmers from lands near the river projects in order to carry out urban renewal projects.

<sup>18</sup> Between 1960 to 1980, close to 800 people moved to Seoul, the capital of South Korea, every twenty-four hours. Close to 50% of the Korean population lives in the Seoul region. This pattern of growth has caused the local government and policy makers to annex valuable farming lands for development.

<sup>19</sup> See *World Agriculture: Towards 2010, An FAO Study*, 260-261 and *The Plundering of Agriculture in Developing Countries*, 18-29.

<sup>20</sup> This report stated that rapid urbanization in the world today is “inevitable because urban development is an integral part of economic development. Economic growth is invariably accompanied by a transition from a predominately agrarian economy to an economy dominated by the production of nonagricultural goods and services. Although some of this transformation can take place in situ as the rural nonfarm economy grows and diversifies, the overriding pattern is one of increasing urbanization.” Nora Dudwick, Katy Hull, Roy Katayama, Forhad Shilpi, and Kenneth Simler, *From Farm to Firm: Rural-Urban Transition in Developing Countries* (Washington D.C.: The World Bank, 2011), 15.

<sup>21</sup> John M. Cohen, “Integrated Rural Development: Clearing out the Underbrush” *Sociologia Ruralis* July (1980): 200.

<sup>22</sup> James Scott, *Seeing Like a State* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 89-90.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 230.

<sup>24</sup> In part, Park started the movement as a result of deep decline in the number of rural voters who voted for him in the 1971 presidential elections. Rural residents normally supported the ruling government before 1971, but the 1971 election saw a high percentage of rural residents voting against him. See Moore, “Mobilization and Disillusion in Rural Korea: The Saemaul Movement in Retrospect,” 584.



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- <sup>25</sup> Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 231 and 241 and Moore, "Mobilization and Disillusion in Rural Korea," 588.
- <sup>26</sup> Moore, "Mobilization and Disillusion in Rural Korea," 591-598
- <sup>27</sup> Korean farmers were especially angry over being ordered to plant new high yielding rice seeds instead of the traditional variety of rice seeds that were preferred by consumers and required less inputs for cultivation. See Nancy Abelmann, *Echoes of the Past* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 212-213.
- <sup>28</sup> Norwegian Afghanistan Committee, *Or Integrated Rural Development*, accessed August 15, 2012, [http://www.afghanistan.no/English/Core\\_activities/Our\\_IRD\\_Programme/index.html](http://www.afghanistan.no/English/Core_activities/Our_IRD_Programme/index.html).
- <sup>29</sup> Cohen, "Integrated Rural Development," 199.
- <sup>30</sup> For a description of these projects see Cynthia Clapp, "Significant Cases in Integrated Rural Development," accessed August 15, 2012, [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PNABH890.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNABH890.pdf)
- <sup>31</sup> See USAID/Armenia, "Integrated Rural Development Lessons Learned," accessed August 1, 2012, [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PNADF432.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADF432.pdf), 1-5
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-5.
- <sup>33</sup> This is a term articulated by Omar Zakhilwal and Jane Murphy Thomas in "Afghanistan: What Kind of Peace?" (working paper, What Kind of Peace is Possible? Project, 2005), 14-23.
- <sup>34</sup> IFAD, "Annual Report 2011," 25.
- <sup>35</sup> Zakhilwal and Thomas, "Afghanistan: What Kind of Peace?," 14-23.
- <sup>36</sup> Angela Cardenas and Kevin O'Loughlin, "Afghanistan Makes Progress by Addressing Land Issues," accessed July 25, 2012, <http://blog.usaid.gov/2012/02/afghanistan-makes-progress-by-addressing-land-issues/> and Frauke de Weijer, "Conference on Afghan Pastoralists," accessed August 5, 2012, <http://cnrit.tamu.edu/peace/pdfs/AfghanPastorlistConference01.06.pdf>
- <sup>37</sup> For more information on Korean cooperatives, Hansalim and its impact on Korean farmers and consumers, see Do Wan Ku, "The Emergence of Ecological Alternative Movements in Korea," *Korean Social Science Journal* 36, no. 2 (2009): 8-29, Hyejin Choi, "Institutionalization of Trust as Response to Globalization: The Case of Consumer Cooperatives in South Korea," *Transit Studies Review* 16, no. 2 (2009): 457-461, Michael Reinschmidt, "Rural Development: Lessons from the Liberalization of Korean Trade," *Korean Journal* 49, no. 4 (2009): 91-134.
- <sup>38</sup> Lei Guang, "Bringing the City Back In," *One Country, Two Societies*. Martin King Whyte, ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 331.
- <sup>39</sup> Andrea Oppenheimer and Timothy Hursley, *Rural Studio* (Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 2002), 2.
- <sup>40</sup> Though Mockbee's projects are located in the United States, there are many lessons to learn from his projects because those in rural Alabama have faced many of the same problems experienced by rural residents in developing countries.
- <sup>41</sup> For a list of new designs meant to safeguard rural life, see Paola Antonelli, *Safe: Design Takes on Risk* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2005). For more information on the BioLite Stove, see Alice Rawsthorn, "Cooking up a Cleaner, Safer Open-Fire Stove," *New York Times*, May 20, 2012.
- <sup>42</sup> See Hiroko Tabuchi, "An Aging Japanese Town Bets on a Young Mayor for Its Revival," *New York Times*, April 26, 2012.
- <sup>43</sup> IFAD, *Annual Report 2011*, 8
- <sup>44</sup> Randal C. Archibold, "A Quake-Scarred Nation Tries a Rural Road to Recovery," *New York Times*, December 24, 2011.
- <sup>45</sup> For an example of a "back to land" movement, see Rachel Donadio, "With work Scarce in Athens, Greeks Go Back to the Land," *The New York Times*, January 8, 2012.
- <sup>46</sup> For a better explanation of the merits of this process and how to carry it out, see William Ascher, "Normative Considerations in Promoting Cultural Preservation or Change" *Cultural Change and Persistence: New Perspective on Development*. William Ascher and John M. Heffron, eds. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 25-42.