

A Study of Rural Development in Iran through the White Revolution: Comparing with South Korea's Rural Development Program (Saemaul Undong)

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Abstract: Iran and South Korea had walked a similar way on the modernization and industrialization in the basis of a similar political system which means dictatorial authoritarianism. Mohammad Reza Shah began the rural development program for increasing income and quality of life of farmers through land reform and tried that the rural would not alienate from modernization and industrialization. Saemaul Undong as the rural development program was began in 1971 under the direction of President Park Chung-Hee in South Korea. The rural development of both countries started from the top with same goal in the case of Iran got a visible and good result through land reform at the first time but didn't last long. However, in the case of South Korea, the rural development program got to improve the quality of life and keep pace with modernization and industrialization through sustainable development.

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1. Introduction

Traditionally, Iran has been an agricultural country. Agriculture was the most important industry in the Old Iranian society. Many historic documents prove this. The Avesta that is one of the Zoroastrian holy books states: "He who sows wheat spreads the truth and contributes to the victory of Ahuramazda¹." And in a beautiful hymn from the Gathas of Vendidad, when Zoroaster asks: "Who brings to the earth its greatest degree of joy?" Ahuramazda replies: "He who irrigates the desert and drains the marshes to make them into fields." (Pahlavi, 1967: 25-26)

The Greek historians have left much evidence that deep respect for agriculture was one of the national traditions of the Persians. In 'Economicus', Xenophon relates the following words of Socrates: "The Persian emperors frequently visit the different parts of their vast empire. If they find a province well endowed with fertile fields and fruitful orchards the reward the governor and sometimes add some territories to his province, but if they see that a province is sparsely populated and much of the land uncultivated, and discover that this is the result of the bad character of negligence of the governor, then they punish and replace him. The King of Persia, whenever he is bestowing gifts, first rewards those who have made the

greatest area of land fertile. Wherever he goes and wherever he resides he sees that the gardens and crops are most numerous. The name 'paradise'² is given to these gardens." (Pahlavi, 1967)

We can see the famous letter from Imam Ali, when he was Caliph to Malek Ashtar who was governor of Egypt to show the true spirit of Islamic thought about the importance of agriculture and peasants: "When the peasants live in comfort and prosperity they can pay their taxes easily. But when the villages are in a state of decline and inhabitants are impoverished they will not obey the orders of the headman. No villagers are ever afflicted by poverty unless the governor is greedy and has failed to learn from the rebellions of the world, and does not know that whatever is amassed by oppression will sooner or later be consumed in the fire of events." (Pahlavi, 1967)

Agriculture is one of the most important industries in modern Iran. Iran has 9.78 percent arable land of whole country. Agriculture took 10.4 percent of GDP in 2011. 25 percent labor force in Iran works in this field.³ Agriculture still occupies an important position in Iran's industrial structure.

Rural development of Iran began in earnest

¹ The Only God of Zoroastrianism.

² The word is of Persian etymology

³ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ir.html>

through the White Revolution of Mahammad Reza Shah. Rural development is viewed as a complex process of changes in rural sub-system and their interaction, leading to desired improvements in rural incomes, employment opportunities, income distribution, access to rural welfare, and other aspects of rural life. This rural development was proceeding in line with Iran's industrialization and modernization policy. Mohammad Reza Shah who sought economic and social modernization on the basis of vast oil money had some plan to change the feudal rural structure through land reform and provide a prosperous life for farmers who were in absolute poverty through rural development.

Korean government that sought modernization and industrialization at the same time realized the need of rural development due to the income difference between urban and rural areas and was to develop and implement rural development program. This rural development program called Saemaul Undong was regarded as one of the most successful rural development program in the world so many countries are coming to Korea for benchmarking.⁴

This paper will cover the rural development and modernization that occurred in 1960's and 70's in the name of the White revolution under the influence of Mohammad Reza Shah and Saemaul Undong which is South Korea's rural development program at that times. This paper will be discussed about the socio-economic change through rural development program excluded political purpose and impact.

First, this study will start to describe the Iranian rural status before the White Revolution and research the rural development process in Iran through the White Revolution. Next, research Saemaul Undong regarded the successful rural development program and then compare with Iranian rural development.

2. Rural Status in Iran before White Revolution

Iran's traditional status of peasant farming remained unchanged until the beginning of the 20's century. Most of Iran suffers from a severe shortage of water, yet government expenditures on irrigation schemes were negligible until well after World War I. Along with the neglect of irrigation, the complete indifference to the improvement of agricultural techniques, the very high cost of transport, the system of land tenure, the vulnerability of the villages to nomadic pillaging and the arbitrary rule of state and provincial governments over the peasantry were all obstacles to the development of agriculture and the

improvement of the living conditions of the peasants(Ajami, 1976).

Prior to land reform, about 15.5 million of Iran's population, 65 percent of the total, lived in about 55,000 villages. According to the First National Census of Agriculture in 1960 the total agricultural land of the country which was estimated at 11.3 million hectares, was cultivated by 2.4 million farming households. Thus, on an average, each household farmed 4.7 hectares of irrigated and unirrigated land. In 1962 the agricultural sector employed 47 percent of the labor force but produced only 29 percent of the gross national product of the country.⁵

Landownership in Iran before White Revolution

Landownership in Iran gave social prestige, wealth, and political power. The large landowners and tribal chiefs held an immensely privileged position in Iranian society.

Broadly speaking, the large landowners fell into four groups. The first consisted of members of the ruling family and the leading members who had obtained their land by conquest, inheritance, gift, or purchase or had acquired it during the course of office; they were for the most part absentee landlords. The second was made up of tribal leaders, who sometimes also belonged to the ruling family or to the official classes; they were less frequently absentees than the first group. The third group consisted of members of the religious classed, whose properties derived originally mainly from grants and pensions from the state, inheritance, purchase, and sometimes from the usurpation of *vaqf*⁶ property; they were usually absentees. The fourth groups were merchants, whose property derived mainly from purchase and sometimes from their transactions as moneylenders; their purpose in the acquisition of land was usually to gain social prestige or security of investment; they too were absentees. Most large landowners usually lived in towns like Tehran not countryside with social, economic, and political influence.

In addition to these groups, there were large numbers of smaller landowners, who either had acquired land as the servants, or bailiffs, of the large landowners or else were shopkeepers and tradesmen, members of the professional classes, or minor government officials, who had inherited land or invested in it to supplement their income from other sources. Lastly, there was a small class of peasant proprietors, who were not, however, to be found in all parts of the country(Lambton, 1969).

⁴http://www.afta.kr/bbs/board.php?bo_table=news&wr_id=716&sfl=&stx=&sst=wr_datetime&sod=asc&sop=and&page=46

⁵ Central Bank of Iran 'National Income of Iran' Tehran, 1969

⁶ Land immobilized for some purpose (usually religious or charitable)

The Status of relation between the Landlord and the Peasant before White Revolution

From early times, the relation between the landlord and the peasant was based on a crop-sharing agreement; more rarely, the peasant had a tenancy agreement. In the former case, the payment to the landlord was mainly, or wholly, in kind; in the latter, in cash or in cash and kind. Crop-sharing agreements, which were recognized both by Islamic law and by the civil code, were mainly regulated by local custom. Five elements – land, water, seed, draft animals, and labor – were taken into consideration in fixing the shares of the two parties. A great variety of practices was found influenced by the nature of the farming, whether dry or irrigated; by the type of irrigation, whether by river water, Qanat⁷, or well; and by the type of crop grown (Azami, 1976). In some areas, the landlord levied dues in addition to a share of the crop, and the peasant was also subject to certain personal services which were derogatory to human dignity. They were levied for the most part on the plowland; more rarely, they were assessed on the basis of the family or as a poll tax. The most onerous of the personal services was labor service (Lambton, 1971). There were some big landlords exploited their peasants with the sole purpose of getting labor and the land rent out of them. The influence of government in village public life was generally weak.

In spite of the unfavorable conditions under which the bulk of the peasant population lived, there is no history of peasant revolts, and the question of land reform, fundamental to a modernization of the state, received little attention until the White Revolution. Before the White Revolution, there were a few efforts for improving the state of peasants. The bill modifying crop-sharing agreements was issued in 1947 by Qavam al-Saltaneh's government. In January 1951, Mohammad Reza Shah sold royal estates to the local peasant, and the first distribution took place near Varamin in March. In 1952 Prime Minister Mosaddeq issued decrees decreasing the landlord's share of the income from a landed estate, abolishing dues and services, and setting up village councils.

3. Rural Development in Iran by the White Revolution

The Mohammad Reza Shah had dreams since childhood of restoring Iran back to its days of power and glory during the ancient Persian Empire led by Cyrus the Great. The Shah was realistic enough to know that Iran would never rival the United States or the Soviet Union but he had a realistic goal to turn Iran

into one of the leading third world nations drawing support from both the United States and the Soviet Union and perhaps from the most powerful nation in the Middle East. To fulfill his lofty goals for his nation, the Shah had dreams for vast and extensive economic and social reforms which he hoped to spread throughout his country in a new and ambitious reform program (Shin, 1983). The Shah even had a symbolic name for his new program that was going to put Iran on its feet again - the White Revolution. He claimed the basis for all of his reform plans would be on far-reaching social reforms, economic development within the framework of free enterprise, cultural progress and international cooperation. The White Revolution became a reality by legal and democratic means early in 1963 when the Shah influenced the nation's parliament to pass into law this five point plan (Pahlavi, 1967).

The five major fields and areas of reform centered around a nationwide literacy program, the nationalization of forestry and water resources, equal rights for women, a profit sharing scheme for workers and a program for land reform. This paper focuses on rural development and modernization here.

Land reform for rural development and modernization

The objectives of the land reform program in its early conception were stated in general terms as abolition of the existing landlord-tenant relations, emancipation of the peasants, promotion of democracy, and development of agriculture.

Generally speaking, the political objective of land reform appeared larger than any economic goal because it seemed to be necessary to carry out a reform that would lessen the power of the landowners before any economic and social progress could be made (Warriner, 1961). As the reform program got underway, its aims became more clearly formulated. The economic objective was to increase agricultural production by generating economic incentives among the tenants through the transfer of land ownership. Also connected with this objective was the provision of financial and technical assistance through an expanding cooperative network and agricultural extension services. The social objectives included a more equitable distribution of agricultural income and improvement of the living conditions in the villages. On the whole, the basic strategy of land reform in its early years was directed toward development of a self-reliant and independent peasant proprietorship system (Ajami, 1976).

Largely the plan was created by Dr. Hassan Arsanjani, the minister of agriculture at the time. The land reform program was designed radically to alter the relations of economic production in the countryside. There were four main tenets in what was later to

⁷ Iranian underground irrigation channel made by excavation.

become only the first stage of the land reform program. According to this first stage, (i) land holdings were limited to one village, (ii) the compensation to be given to the landlords was fixed on the basis of the taxable value of the lands forfeited, (iii) the land they had been cultivating was allocated to the peasants without upsetting the field layout of the village, and (iv) membership in a co-operative society became a condition for the cultivators' receipt of land (Lambton, 1969).

The second stage of the land reform was initiated on 17 January 1963. Five additional articles to the land reform law of 9 January 1962 were issued. The new provisions required that landlords either sell or rent their land to peasants (the rate of the rent to be based on the average income of the peasants), or divide the land between the peasants and themselves (Lambton, 1969). This was a further effort to break up the holdings of the landlords and to subsequently transfer the land over to the peasantry. By March 1963, much progress had been made. The power of the landlords was largely broken. In Azerbaijan and Gilan, where the land had been transferred, standards of cultivation had improved, and there had been some increase in productivity per acre. On the other hand, sources of private credit had largely dried up. The co-operative societies had taken steps to remedy the situation, but their resources were minute and they could only give credit to peasants working on the transferred land, as yet a very small proportion of the whole (Lambton, 1971). By early 1963 the growing independence of the peasantry and the popularity of the land reform program's main architect, Dr. Arsanjani, began to appear as a potential threat to the regime. On 10 March 1963, Arsanjani was dismissed and was replaced by General Riahi.

In January 1966 Riahi announced a third stage to the land reform program, intended for the 'full exploitation' of the country's agricultural resources (Lambton, 1969). Dr. Valian, who replaced Riahi in 1967, was the actual engineer of this final stage of land reform. In October 1968, measures were introduced in the Majlis to abolish the sale of land to the occupying peasants and to establish joint stock agricultural companies, which were to be owned and operated by the government (Lambton, 1971). The agricultural companies were set up supposedly in order to expedite the mechanization of agriculture, reduce manpower inefficiency, and thus to increase output. The peasants, meanwhile, were to sell their newly acquired lands to the companies in return for a share of their stocks and employment in them as agricultural laborers. The eventual failure of the rural co-operatives set up in the third stage of the land reform, however, not only caused many peasants to become landless, but also put many of them out of work. Some became

wage-earning farm laborers while others migrated to the cities. One estimate put the number of the rural laboring class at more than 100,000 families (Abrahamian, 1982). Furthermore, one of the consequences of this third stage of the land reform was that former patterns of land ownership and rural social stratification were gradually reinstated (Kamrava, 1990).

After land reform, by the early 1970s, there were three distinct groups in the countryside. The first group is Absentee farmers who included the royal family, religious foundations, agribusinesses, including multinational corporations, and old-time landlords. In addition to these large landlords, there were smaller landlords – many of them bureaucrat, army officers, and urban entrepreneurs. The second group is independent farmers, consisting of former peasant proprietors that benefited from land reform. Before land reform, independent farmers had constituted less than 5 percent of the rural population. After land reform, they constituted as much as 76 percent of the rural population. Although land reform greatly increased the ranks of peasant proprietors, it failed to give most recipients enough to make them into viable, let alone prosperous, farmers. Of the 2,800,000 peasant households that owned land in 1972, 1,850,000 (65 percent) had holdings less than five hectares – two hectares less than the minimum required in most regions to make an adequate living. Only 600,000 peasant households, totaling no more than 17 percent of the rural population, owned prosperous farms ranging from ten to fifty hectares. To alleviate the problem of small holdings, after 1967 the government encouraged poorer peasants to join state-run farm corporations and to exchange their plots for shares in these corporations. By 1976, over 33,000 families had joined eighty nine such corporations. The last is rural wage earners formed mostly of agricultural laborers whom land reform had bypassed, and former nomads whose migratory routes had been closed off. Totaling over 1,100,000 families, this underclass survived working as farm hands, shepherds, village construction laborers, day commuters to nearby industrial towns, and wage earners employed in the many small plants that flourished in the countryside during the early 1970s – small plants manufacturing carpets, shoes, clothes, paper, sugar, tobacco, brass utensils, and household furniture (Abrahamian, 1982).

There had been a noticeable diminution of the relative importance of the agricultural sector both as an employer and as a contributor to GDP. In terms of employment, the proportion of the labor force employed in agriculture has declined from 56 percent in 1957 to about 47 percent in 1972. The rate of the per capita, value added of the agricultural sector to that of the industrial sector declined from 68 percent in 1972 to 45 percent in 1976, emphasizing the widening

income gap between the two areas. In terms of its contributions to Gross Domestic Product, the diminishing relative importance of the agricultural sector was much more pronounced. The average annual growth rate of agricultural output over the period 1962-76 amounted to 4.1 percent as compared with 9.8 percent for GDP, thus reducing the share of agricultural value added in GDP from 31 percent in 1962 to less than 10 percent in 1976 (Vahidi, 1978).

Setting up the Co-operatives and Agricultural Modernization

The Shah thought that in order to carry out the rural development program which would result in a higher standard of living for farmers, it was essential to develop the rural co-operatives, since without them any really positive or useful work could be accomplished by the farmers who have become the new land-owner. For this reason, simultaneously with the execution of land reform, a large number of villagers who had acquired land, and their number began to increase rapidly. From the start these co-operatives were most effective in meeting many of the needs of farmers, such as granting them loans and credits, supplying them with chemical fertilizers and, in dry region, helping them to overcome the shortage of water.

The major function of these co-operatives had been (1) to provide credit facilities at relatively low rates of interest – for this purpose, the Agricultural Credit Bank was changed to the Agricultural Cooperative Bank, (2) to construct local and regional warehouses for storing and distributing consumer goods, agricultural inputs and agricultural products, and (3) to purchase the surplus production of the cooperative members for sale in major wholesale markets in order to protect them from excessively unfair dealing with middlemen (Doroudian, 1976). In the autumn of 1963 a body named the Central Organization of Rural Co-operatives was established under the aegis of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Agricultural Credits and Rural Development Bank of Iran with an initial capital of 1,000 million Rials (\$13.3 million). Its purpose was to instruct the rural co-operatives in the best ways of carrying out their duties, primarily by teaching the principles of co-operative method, training supervisory personnel, extending the network of co-operatives in country districts, granting credits so as to increase productivity and farmers' incomes, marketing agricultural products, developing and strengthening cottage industries, and establishing relations with consumer associations and international co-operative organization. The principal aim of all this was that in time the co-operatives would be managed by the farmers themselves. The share of the central organization would eventually be sold to the regional associations, so that it would be entirely owned by the farmers (Pahlavi, 1967).

In the early days, the co-operatives met with much opposition from landowners and middlemen, which was perhaps a measure of their success. Already by 1964, when the first stage of the reform was nearing completion, the co-operatives had made a great impact in the villages, although the understanding of the purposes and functions of the co-operative movement was still somewhat primitive and many of the co-operatives did not function effectively. By 1966 the instruction given to the co-operatives, though still inadequate, was a great deal better than it had been earlier. There was by then a growing demand for multipurpose co-operatives. Further, the members of the co-operatives had in many cases developed a sense of loyalty to and pride in their co-operative. By the summer of 1968, there had been a remarkable growth in the understanding and competence of the managers of the co-operatives and also, but to a lesser extent, among the members. Gradually, but steadily, on the basis of the small society, the members of which knew each other intimately, relations of trust and confidence and a spirit of co-operation were being built up, and a wider sense of unity was being developed through the federations. The co-operatives were serving a useful purpose in giving the peasants some education in business and teaching them the connection between better farming, better living, and better business. They provided their members with practice in consultation and gave them a center where the common mind might be found and expressed. In this way, they were helping to bring out the latent ability of their members.

This followed from the intention to create an independent, self-supporting, and responsible peasantry. There are, however, certain objections to using the co-operatives for the conduct of all village affairs. First, all villagers are not members; second, since government agencies have a legitimate interest in certain village affairs and in getting certain things done, they have the opportunity, if not the right, to interfere with the co-operatives if they are the general agency for all village affairs. In fact, though not necessarily for these reasons, the co-operatives did not become the only agency for the conduct of village affairs, and an increasing number of other agencies have been set up. The village council, under the Ministry of the Interior, is in theory concerned with the administration of village affairs. Under a law promulgated in 1963, a local tribunal was set up in many villages to settle minor disputes locally. This was of benefit to the peasants in that it eliminated the need for time-consuming and expensive journeys to the local town. The various bodies sometimes cut across one another's activities and often drew upon the same persons to form their committees. There had been a regrettable tendency to multiply the number of government officials representing different ministries working at the village level. There were too many

officials and too many uncoordinated policies(Lambton, 1971).

The Estimate of Iranian Rural Development by the White Revolution

In summary, the White revolution was the beginning of the true modernization of Iran. However, although each of these reforms was sincerely thought out and planned by those involved, many of the reforms were superficial and more attractive looking than actually effective. Though there is no question that the White Revolution helped tremendously in pointing Iran in the right direction, there can be no overlooking the fact that many of the reforms were not carried out to the extent that they should have been(Shin, 1983).

It was true that the White Revolution provided some farmers with land, co-operatives, tractors, fertilizers, and so on. But it was equally true that the White Revolution did not touch much of the countryside. Most peasants received no or little land. Most villages were left without electricity, schools, piped water, rural roads, and other basic amenities(Abrahamian, 2008).

The introduction of innovative farming methods and the building of new road system were the most significant benefits of the land reform, as Iran during the early sixties became almost a totally self-sufficient nation with regards to food for her people. However, this achievement was also short-lived. During the mid-seventies the agricultural output of the nation did a complete turnaround when Iran's total economy began to slide after peaking so quickly. And in 1976 alone Iran spent one billion to import food for her people and to subsidize prices(U.S. News and World Report, 1976). Land reform attempts were also a failure outside of the reform plan for government land. Big landowners did not follow suit with the government officials and many of the really big private estates remained undone. With some major landowners owning more than fifty separate villages. The large feudal estates were gradually broken up by pressure from the Shah, but the feudal lords were intelligent enough to distribute their land only to certain farmers so many of the peasants that actually needed this land remained landless. Also, the plots of land allocated to former sharecroppers were often so small that they were not economically viable for the farmers to maintain. The new farming innovations mentioned before were terrific in the fact that they enabled the farmers to produce crops at a much higher and more profitable rate than before; but as the new farming mechanization was introduced, one family was able to cultivate more land towards large-scale commercial farming was not actually land reform in itself, and it did not effectively solve Iran's economic problems in the long run(Shin, 1983).

The White Revolution was designed not only not to alter the political establishment but instead to

secure its further consolidation by cultivating the support of the peasantry and by establishing a base of support among them. By literally handing out land deeds to peasants on highly publicized occasions, the Shah wanted to appear as their savior and to ensure their support for his regime and his personal self. It was hoped that the White Revolution would expedite the socio-cultural modernization of the county. Economically, the land reform focused specifically on the countryside. It aimed at abolishing large landholding and feudal classes and at distributing their confiscated properties among a newly emerging class of landowning peasants. The government hoped to complete the capitalist transformation of the country and to complement Iran's urban-based capitalism with a similar development in rural areas. The government was successful in achieving these goals, but only in the short term. The long-term ramifications of the White Revolution's promises proved fatal to regime(Kamrava, 1990).

4.Comparison with Saemaul Undong in South Korea

Saemaul Undong was part of modernization process in South Korea. It allowed the country to improve incomes and living standards, not only in urban areas, but also in rural areas. Saemaul Undong core values were based on the society best qualities. Therefore, the principal objectives of the movement were not only to improve infrastructure and income, but also to positively empower people to develop their capabilities and give them access to better opportunities. These values meant promotion for dynamic labor force to improve productivity (diligence), the production of rice in rural villages for their own consumption (self-reliance) and the participation of villagers in the rural development process (cooperation). Under the implementation of the three core values, farm household income increased from an average of 255,800 won in 1970 to 1,531,300 in 1979 and rural poverty declined from 27.9% in 1970 to 10.8% in 1978(Park, 2008). As a result of the combination of rural policies and based in these values South Korea achieved a rural development policy that took many people out of poverty.

The Land Reform in South Korea

The land reform, which took place in three stages from 1946 to 1955 in South Korea, gave people who had been tenants of Korean and Japanese landlords under the Japanese rule (1910-1945) the opportunity to become independent farmers. After World War II, the American military government (1945-1948) took the first step of the land reform in 1946. It limited peasants' rental payments for land to one-third of the value of the land's annual harvest,

which was a drastic reduction. In 1948, the American military government sold land that used to belong to the Japanese Oriental Development Company (later the New Korea Public Company) to tenants for prices equivalent to three years of harvests. Affected by the socialist land reform in North Korea, the sovereign Korean government, established in 1948, promulgated a series of land reform laws in 1949 and implemented them from 1949 to 1955. These included three basic principles with more emphasis on equality than growth: (1) only those who are actually farming can own farm land; (2) land can be owned up to a maximum of three hectares; and (3) farmers cannot contract out their land to others for farming. (Sin, 1988) Based on these principles, the government bought land from those who owned more than the maximum of did not farm it themselves, and sold it to those who had farmed it as tenants.

Although some landowners sold their land before the implementation of the land reform, more than 60 percent of the land was bought by government. Landowners were paid with government bonds, while tenant farmers were able to buy the land from the government for a price equivalent to one and a half times the annual harvest, which they could pay over a three-year period (Kim, 1997). In 1945, 65 percent of farmers were tenant farmers; by 1951, after the land reform, the figure was 8.1 percent.

It would be fair to say that the land reform in Korean was successful in that it helped farmers to own their own land. The inequality of land ownership was reduced sharply (Kwon, 2010). The socio-economic impact of land reform was profound, transforming rural South Korea from a landlord-dominated economy and social structure to a relatively egalitarian rural society characterized by small-farm owners and few landless households (Reed, 2010).

The Distinctions of Saemaul Undong

1. Autonomous and Voluntary Participation of Villagers

As much as it was top-down and centralized, Saemaul Undong was almost equally bottom-up in some ways. While the main role of the central government was limited to leading and coordinating the nationwide activities of the various stakeholders, villagers, at the opposite end, took responsibility for village level; activities, tailoring them to the needs and circumstances of the communities.

2. The Aggressive and Constant Support of Top-Leader

It has been argued that no policies or programs can be successfully implemented without the commitment of the government, and Saemaul Undong was no exception. Strong commitment and leadership from the very top played a crucial part in its success. It was President Park, with his strong will and

commitment, who initiated, designed and provided continuous support for Saemaul Undong. The unwavering commitment of the top leader enabled too government to allocate 5 percent of its tax revenue-average 2.5 percent of GNP (Kwon, 2010) every year to the program for the 10 years. For 10 years from 1971 to 1979, he made Saemaul Undong a top priority of his government, checking monthly progress, inviting villagers to cabinet meetings to give presentations, and making surprise visits to villages and training centers. A strong commitment from the top leader enabled effective vertical integration linking all the levels of government and created a holistic approach horizontally mobilizing resources and coordinating plans among the relevant ministries. With Saemaul Undong a top government priority, government officials made significant efforts for the program's success as they knew their personal gains, such as promotion, were dependent on their performance (Park, 2009). It would have been difficult to sustain and manage the nationwide program for a decade without continuous commitment from the top leader.

3. The Adherence of Competition and Autonomy for Assistance

In 1973, based on performance evaluation, the government disqualified 6,108 villages out of a total of some 30,000 villages from receiving further assistance for the following year. The principle of "more assistance to more successful villages" acted as an effective stimulator, increasing competition among villages and promoting more participation for better achievement (Kim, 2000). Later, government classified all the rural villages into three categories and selectively provided villages with assistance, favoring those advancing towards a "self-sustainable community" while spurring the lagging villages to catch up with others.

The government provided successful villages and their leaders with rewards. They were regarded as national heroes and presented their stories at cabinet meetings and training courses and in schools. Local government officials, with their personal interests regularly at stake, sometimes every day, visited rural villages and kept detailed records of village achievements. The strong message from the top was that rural development was a national priority and it was to be implemented through Saemaul Undong, and that they would be held accountable for its success (Goldsmith, 1981).

4. Improving the Quality of Rural Life

The rural household income rose from 21,317 won (Korean Currency) to 185,133 won between 1970 and 1979. While the urban household income increased from 31,700 won to 219,133 won. This meant rapid growth and better incomes for both rural and urban areas. The improvement in the income of rural

households appeared to be part of the policies towards agricultural productivity and rural development. Green Revolution played role in improving agricultural production. As part of the projects that sought to improve the agricultural income, new technologies and new seeds were used.

The projects developed under Saemaul Undong were based on the specific needs of the villages to achieve rural development. The model of Saemaul Undong, was to conduct projects that ‘meet residents’ visible needs, encourage self confidence among residents and achieve village development’.⁸

Saemaul Undong brought significant improvements in the rural living environment and infrastructure. Enlarged and extended roads made mechanized farming possible, while the extension of telephone lines and electrification provided timely information and enabled villagers to cope with changing market situations. The improvement consequently created a virtuous circle of human development. Improved basic infrastructure helped to increase productivity and income, with better access and wider opportunities, while also creating a healthier environment with better sanitation. Their experience of cooperation with the government provided learning-by-doing opportunities for building capacities in project management. It also boosted confidence and changed attitudes, which led to the empowerment of people in the villages and transformations in local governance (Park, 2009).

5. The Role of Saemaul Undong Leaders and Practical and Experienced-based Training

Much research has identified the crucial presence of an organizational or political “entrepreneur” that mobilizes and leads people in collective activities as one of the key factors in successful local development (Park, 2009). The democratically selected young male and female leaders of Saemaul Undong played an important role in promoting participation and in eventually introducing democratic leadership to the villages. One common denominator shared by almost all of the success cases was the devotion and dedication of the leaders in the villages. Most villagers pointed to the devoted and diligent Saemaul Undong leaders as the number one factor of success.

When Saemaul Undong started the communities were told to find a leader inside each community. The leaders in each community were chosen accordingly with their capacities, initiative and participation. They were selected among the young and active people by the people in the communities. To follow the goals of the movement these leaders needed to work very close with the local government institutions. Their education

was also very important. President Park convened experts and professors for this education and training program and made curriculum contents more practical and applicable instead of theoretical. Thus Practical and experience-based training that President Park advised was given to more than 500,000 people during the course of Saemaul Undong from 1972 to 1980. Program provided practical skills and technologies on project management and new tools and technologies in agriculture. Practical knowledge gained from training programs helped to improve their living standards, which in turn led the villagers to change their traditional attitude and strengthen the lessons of attitudinal change provided by other training. Training also provided the participants with a chance to share knowledge and exchange view on their failures and successes while serving as a communication channel relaying the suggestions and opinions of the participants to the government (Park, 2009).

5. Conclusion

In the 1960's, Iran and South Korea began the modernization and industrialization. They had walked a similar way on the proposition of modernization and industrialization in the basis of a similar political system which means dictatorial authoritarianism. The rural development is no exception. Mohammad Reza Shah began the rural development program for increasing income and quality of life of farmers through land reform and tried that the rural would not alienate from modernization and industrialization. Saemaul Undong as the rural development program was began in 1971 under the direction of President Park Chung-Hee in South Korea. The rural development of both countries stated from the top with same goal in the case of Iran got a visible and good result through land reform at the first time but didn't last long. However, in the case of South Korea, the rural development program got to improve the quality of life and keep pace with modernization and industrialization through sustainable development.

The causes of these differences can be classified into four groups.

The first is social structural difference between two countries. In the case of South Korea, the feudal system was collapsed during the Japanese colonial period (1910-1945) and the Korean War (1950-1953), land reform was also implemented, and most farmers had farming land before Saemaul Undong. Korean society was equipped with a social structural condition in order to be successful. Iran, however, was consuming too much energy in land reform. The control of large landowners and the vested interests had waned over time. Iranian government could not concentrate on the objectives of rural development properly due to the conflict of land reform.

⁸ <http://www.saemaul.or.kr/english/saemaulundong.asp>

The second is the difference of top-leaders' commitment and sustained attention for the rural development between two countries. In the case of South Korea, President Park as a top-leader checked various government meetings for Saemaul Undong selected as the top priority of socio-economic government development programs directly and encouraged officials and farmers who had a responsibility to implement Saemaul undong successfully. They had participated actively upholding the will of the top-leader. On the other hand, Mohammad Reza Shah didn't implement the rural development program with the initial commitment and attention consistently due to political conflict and several development programs without priority. These made the lack of ongoing government support and monitoring the implement of program.

The third is the difference of voluntary participation and attitudinal changes between two countries. In the case of South Korea, more and more villagers became involved and devoted to Saemaul Undong over time. Villagers with the leading of Saeamul Undong leaders gradually transformed the rural situation using the government polity based on autonomy and competition actively. Iran also made the co-operatives to teach and guide villagers to better rural situation in the initiative land reform. However, the training program for changing the villager's attitude did not success due to the absence of appropriate program and lack of villager's participation.

The last is the difference of remarkable and continuous changes in the rural between two countries. In the case of South Korea, villagers were confident that they could change their villages because there were income increase and improving the quality of life through Saemaul Undong. Mechanization, Agricultural techniques and productivity brought villagers to increase income. Public service and infrastructure also gave good quality of life to villagers. In the case of Iran, even though somewhere land reform and rural development program was implemented got some benefit like electricity supply and rural road in the first time, most villagers were left without any benefit of rural development program. Small land owners and peasants had lived in difficulty and foreign and governmental large corporation became very rich due to agricultural technology and mechanization.

It is very hard to compare the rural development between two countries that have a different social and historic structure. However, we could find out though this research that Shah's land reform that had a special political aim to reduce the influence of large landowners and religious organizations caused various political conflicts, most villagers didn't respond to rural development program properly and government didn't support consistently

for rural development.

Saemaul Undong took an important role for rural development involving villagers' voluntary participation. After attitudinal changes, most villagers thought that they could change their own villages by themselves. It made a remarkable and continuous result in rural communities.

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