



10

Policy Recommendations for Africa

The Need for a Drastic Turnaround

In Chapter 5, I talked about the ‘missing links’ in Africa’s development. The three things that I highlighted are the sense of nation, development-mindedness and the active role of the state. Mystified as to why so many things appeared not be working properly in the region, I pondered at great length as to what might be the reason for this. Over time, it occurred to me that basically these three things were fundamentally lacking.

Attaining these missing links expeditiously may not be easy but they are achievable, just as the Western and Asian countries, as well as others, have been able to do. Perhaps too many people, both Africans and outsiders, have come to have a fixed idea that African people cannot develop on their own and have to be helped continuously. But there can be nothing more detrimental for development than such thinking. No meaningful development can take place with outside assistance alone, regardless of how much assistance one can get from others. External supports can be of value only if they are used as instruments for bigger purposes than as short-term ends in themselves.

It is not enough simply to lay out national visions and express aspirations. Elaborate road maps and master plans that you see so often in many countries in the region have no bearing on development if proper and intensive actions are not taken in a methodical and sustained way. And there is no question that a nation will fare much better if it has a stronger sense of purpose and inclination to act in order to achieve whatever goals they might pursue as a nation. There have been no shortage of verbal expressions and written works stressing what must be done, but everybody seems to be waiting for someone else to take action. So, why is it that people are reluctant to take action?

Maybe a better question to ask would be: 'What induces people to act?' Here, the concept of *sinsangpilbuhur*—the rule of incentives and sanctions (punishment) or economic discrimination—may come in handy. In the absence of incentives for good deeds, people will be less inclined to take positive action than otherwise would have been the case; equally, if there were no sanctions for misdeeds, people will be more inclined to repeat them than if there were sanctions. Hence, it will be an ideal proposition for a society to have in place a strong mechanism of incentives and sanctions for the maintenance of social order and productivity. The logic of 'doing' (being functional) should prevail over the logic of 'being' (being overly fixated on rights).

Regarding incentives, there is a general theory in psychology conceived by Abraham Maslow called 'the hierarchy of human needs', which is described in a pyramid structure. According to Maslow, human motivations follow a general pattern of movement up the ladder from basic needs to sophisticated needs: 'physiological needs' → 'safety and security' → 'social needs' → 'esteem' → 'self-actualization' → 'self-transcendence'. Originally, this comprised five stages, but Maslow later added 'self-transcendence' to his hierarchy. 'Physiological needs' refers to survival or basic instincts like wanting air, shelter, water, sleep, sex, etc. 'Safety and security' means individuals wanting to avoid immediate threats and dangers to their lives. 'Social needs' means love and belonging, like having friendship and family. 'Esteem' is about self-respect, confidence and achievement; 'self-actualization' means the realization of a person's full potential; and 'self-transcendence' is the achievement of one's 'highest' goal outside of regular dimensions in altruism and spirituality.¹

Where there are human needs, there are incentives. Hence, the secret to success in achieving development may lie in inducing positive actions amongst the people using incentives that conform to their needs. But what are the incentives? This is essentially a relative and variable term, and their value or appeal depends on the perception of the people. For instance, all human beings would seek basic needs, but not necessarily everyone would pursue 'esteem' or 'self-transcendence', or at least not to the same degree. The meaning and importance of 'self-actualization' may vary greatly depending on the individual's social, cultural, economic background, and it also depends on personal traits and the level of ambitions of individuals.

So, what shapes human incentives? And how can they be structured? Can society and the state, together with the private sector, shape the structure of incentives for people in a way that can enhance national development? The answer is yes, and they should do so. These questions are related to perceptions, and therefore to mindsets. Along with incentives, punishments or sanctions can be a powerful and effective motive which can be conducive to development. But their value and effectiveness are only good insofar as they are perceived as such. This is why mindset change campaign is crucial, and the necessary interventions should be sought right away. Below is an illustration of how these are structured to meet national developmental goals.

The following figure illustrates incentives and punishments from the short-, mid- and long-term perspective. Short-term incentives for individuals would correspond to basic human needs or instincts for physical survival, like getting food and money. Mid-term incentives correspond to needs like securing a job, earning income and being recognized. Long-term incentives are the desires to realize self-fulfilment or gratification from the perspective of life accomplishment (Fig. 10.1).

Punishments are 'negative' incentives or disincentives. Punishments are applied for various acts—violations, misconduct, failures, crimes, etc.—that are censured by society. Short-term punishments are applied rightly and expeditiously, like when one is caught stealing. Mid-term punishments can be brought about by incompetence, under-performance, misjudgement, maladjustment, etc. and manifest themselves in the form of loss of trust, job, business opportunities, etc.

	short-term	mid-term	long-term
Incentives	survival (food, money, physical needs)	stability (job, income, recognition)	self-fulfilment (social status, career management, respect)
Punishments	immediate sanctions, penalties	instability, lost opportunities	deprivation, alienation, dishonour, life-failure

Fig. 10.1 The basic structure of incentives and punishments

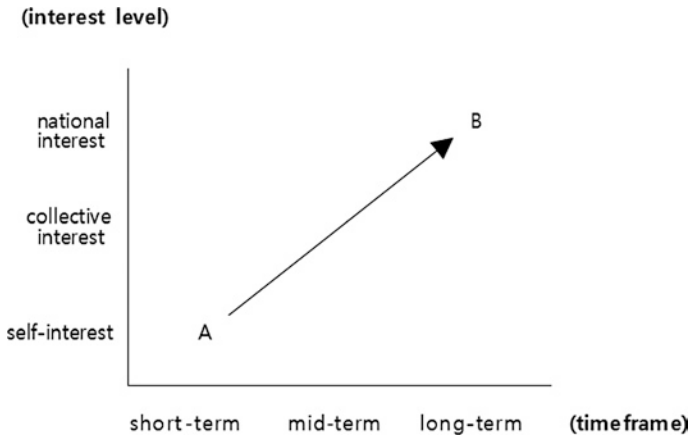


Fig. 10.2 The desired trajectory of pursuit of interest (incentives)

Long-term punishments would include more serious sanctions like long-term imprisonment, public censure and stigmatization, being banned for life from a profession, etc.

Once we recognize the basic elements of the incentive-punishment structure existing in the society, we may ask, how can they be applied? Figure 10.2 should be easy to understand. The vertical axis indicates different levels of interest that people seek, ranging from personal to national: self-interest, broader interest beyond individuals that can be called collective interest, and the national interest. The horizontal axis shows the timeframe: short-term, mid-term and long-term. If we can indeed engineer people’s interest or incentive structure to evolve for the

better, the desired path would be from point A to point B. People's pursuit of their personal interests is a matter of course. But people should always try to see the bigger picture of their environment and society because the 'inordinate' pursuit of personal interest by everybody will fundamentally deteriorate the conditions of their organization or society and make them unhealthy, which will, in turn, have detrimental effects on their personal interests—hence the importance of social order, social capital and collective/social interest. The same holds true for the national interest, and national development can be achieved only if national interests are promoted.

Figure 10.3 illustrates the missing links to achieving transformative and sustainable development in Sub-Saharan Africa: a sense of nation or national identity, a strong and proactive role played by the government and development-mindedness (knowing, practising, owning, passion: KPOP). 'Sense of nation' corresponds to 'social fabric'; 'active role of government' represents 'effective governance'; and 'development-mindedness' translates into 'productivity'. The pyramid shows in what order these three elements were put to work in realizing the economic (and to a certain degree political) transformation of South Korea.

Korea is a good case study highlighting the typical features of East Asian developmental states. Koreans developed a strong sense of national identity and unity during their struggle against Japan's colonial rule, the fight for independence and the push for post-war national

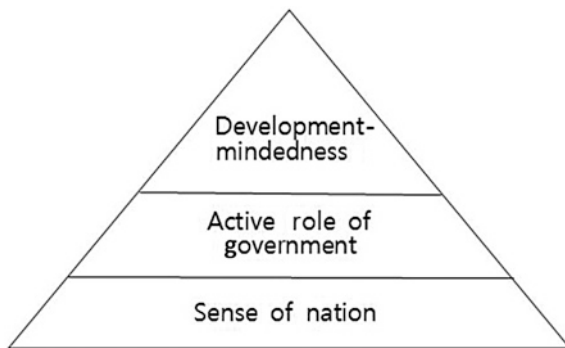


Fig. 10.3 The missing links to development

reconstruction.² In fact, throughout its history, Korea has been constantly subjected to aggression or threats by its neighbours and in the late nineteenth century, it became the arena of geopolitical rivalry among foreign powers.

Immediately after achieving independence in the aftermath of the Second World War, Korea was divided and subsequently engulfed in a civil war that devastated the entire nation.

Overcoming incessant adversities and challenges was at the core of the Korea's story of survival, modernization and full-fledged development. In the midst of despair and disorientation, the government's role was paramount in spearheading the nation forward on the path to modernization, particularly in the early stages of economic take-off. The government was the standard-bearer and initiated the empowerment of the people by instilling development-mindedness in them. The people positively complied, producing an extraordinary synergistic effect of government–people–business collaboration.

While this is not illustrated here, there can be alternative paths (in terms of sequence) for countries where a sense of nation, national identity and unity are still weak. For example, a strong government initiative bringing on board various political, social and regional leaders and groups could foster a sense of nation and development-mindedness. This could be done by national campaigns spearheaded by political leaders.

Before we deduce a development formula or model, which is an important aim of this book, it will be informative to also try to illustrate what is the basic structure of development of Sub-Saharan African countries. This is shown in Fig. 10.4. You can see that 'government' and 'firms' are marked much smaller relative to 'market' and 'foreign assistance', and that the area of overlap of these components is also small. This means that the role of or dependency on the market and foreign aid is relatively much higher. And often it is difficult to make distinctions between business and development activities.

Here, a widespread market liberalization is a common feature and the economy is left to the market system to take care of itself. There is little government intervention or role played to promote and stimulate the economy. Naturally, foreign assistance or donors' support is substantial,

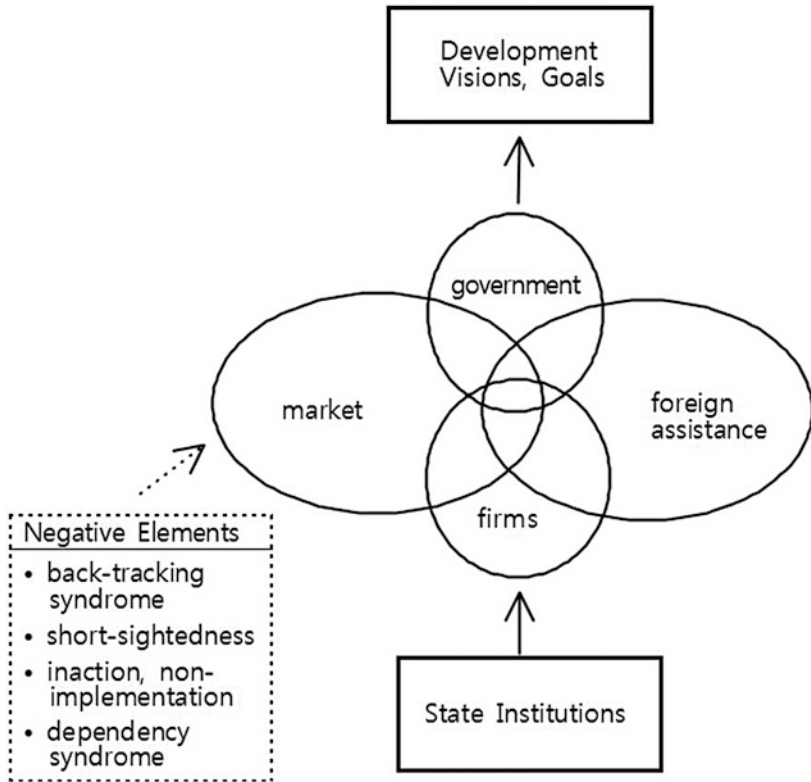


Fig. 10.4 The basic economic development structure of Sub-Saharan Africa

but this is not well integrated or converted into real economic growth. Businesses are lacklustre in terms of their numbers, scale, activities and contribution to national income. If we exclude foreign companies and multi-national corporations, it is further reduced. There is little fusion and synergy among these four economic elements, as the figure shows. I have indicated 'negative elements' because these are also substantial impediments to the attainment of development visions. Evidently, for most Sub-Saharan African countries, they seem to have 'sound' state institutions, superficially, that is, in statutory terms.

But there are many negative elements as well as shortcomings at various levels and stages of policy formation and implementation.

Enough has been said of corruption, lack of transparency and accountability, bad governance, disregard for the rule of law, etc. and these are not only the causes of problems, but also the reflections and outcomes of more deep-seated problems. Simply denouncing and wishing these away will not be helpful; what is more important is to tackle the underlying causes of these problems. The fundamental way to do so would be through a mindset change geared towards development.

Figure 10.5 depicts the ‘holy trinity of economics’ and ‘economic discrimination’, the terms coined by Sung-Hee Jwa.³ He stresses that the market is not the sole entity in the capitalist economy and that the government and firms are also very important players. The picture shows that the market, the government and firms, the ‘holy trinity’ of economics, can be closely intertwined and can interact with one another to produce sustainable and dynamic economic growth, with ‘economic discrimination’—the rule of incentives and punishments—playing a pivotal role at the centre, as was the case in South Korea. This will be addressed again later. Figure 10.6 shows a proposed model of development for Sub-Saharan Africa, which also provides a summary of the theme of this chapter.

The Sub-Saharan African nations have for so long underperformed and under-achieved in terms of their potential, while being unable to take advantage of opportunities, because they have not come to terms

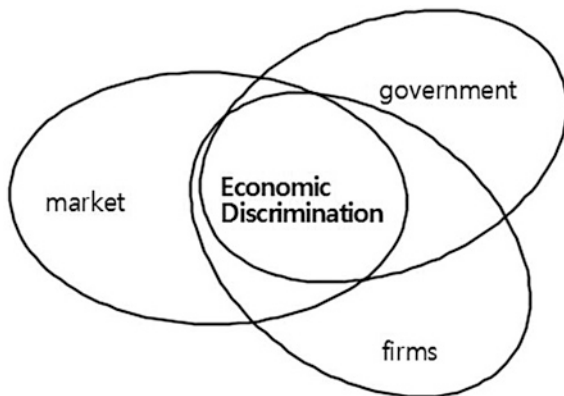


Fig. 10.5 The holy trinity of economics and ‘economic discrimination’ (Source Sung-Hee Jwa (2017))

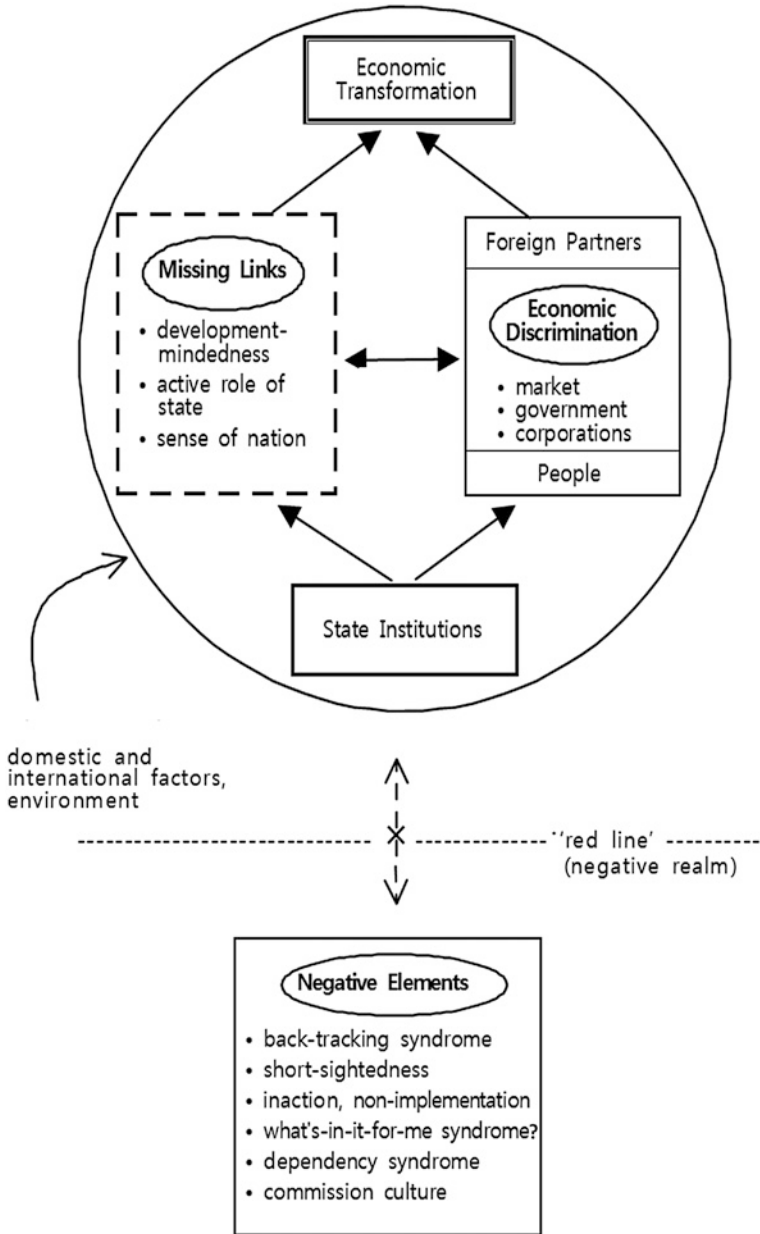


Fig. 10.6 The new development formula for Africa

with what must be done to enable real progress in relation to economic livelihood and status. But people may not fully grasp what they have been missing and can even be misled by unfounded praise. It was fashionable to talk about ‘Africa-rising’ and the continent has been touted as the last frontier of the global market. Citing the fast and sustained economic growth registered in Sub-Saharan African countries, some wondered whether African development has indeed turned the corner. However, Africa’s growth started to dip in 2011, hitting a low in 2016. The region’s economic growth has been picking up again from 2017, helped by the global economic recovery, but the trajectory seems to be a very moderate recovery, as projected by the African Development Bank (2018).

The lessons learned dictate that we need to be cautious. Many point out that the recent economic growth in Africa has serious shortcomings. For example, David Booth and Diana Gammack point out that the pattern of economic growth of Sub-Saharan Africa is not leading to the structural transformation that is needed because it:

is not having a large impact on mass poverty, mainly because it is not rooted in agricultural productivity gains. It is not leading to a diversification of production and exports or to the acquisition of technological capabilities by new generations of productive enterprises. Much of the current growth is jobless growth, a fatal feature given that sub-Saharan Africa’s population is expected to rise from 800 million today to 2.5 billion with a generation, with over one half of the total living in cities. (Mills and Herbst 2012: 18–19)⁴

Likewise, Kingsley Chiedu Moghalu poses a question: ‘But let us pause and ponder. Is this development, in which Africa has come to be regarded as the “last frontier” of the global economy – an inevitable outcome of globalization – really a cause for celebration? Will it lead to the real rise of the continent as an economic power house in the mould of Asia or the West? Is Africa engaging the world – and globalization – on its own terms?’⁵ And he adds that Africa’s economic growth is not transformative, considering that its economic growth statistics are derived mostly from cyclical benefits from a structural dependence on primary commodity products.⁶

It seems that African countries and the international development community alike have stayed too long in a state of blindness. Many of them are likely to have fixed views on Africa, taking Africa's situation as a *given* and trying to get things done under the premise of the *given* circumstances. The fatal mistake was trying to do everything from one end—donors—while very little was done from the receiving end, the end where change needs to take place. Although foreign assistance did not 'fit' Africa because of a fundamental mismatch between the two, both sides stuck to doing the same thing for too long.

This compatibility matter is not confined to development assistance; it also applies to regular business, trade and investment, and other exchanges in various fields. The continued mismatch occurs because there is no proper process of 'incorporation' or internalization on the part of the protagonists. An African observer states: 'Many still blame colonialists, but more than 50 years of independence, is Africa where it ought to be? Aren't we also to blame for our continent's delayed transformation? A lot, if not all of our crude transformation impeding mentalities come from our culture—families which form our foundational perceptions, and interactions with the wider society ... Who do we expect to perform magic of correcting these erroneous mentalities?'⁷

As shown in Fig. 10.6, I have 'remodelled' the 'holy trinity' formula to fit the Sub-Saharan African countries by adding two more elements to it: people and development partners. This reflects the different environment African countries are facing compared to those that Korea and East Asian countries faced during their high growth period. First, Sub-Saharan Africa is heavily dependent on foreign aid and funding. Second, the 'people' factor needs to be gauged because African governments are confronted with additional challenges in terms of garnering popular support due to intrinsic socio-cultural dynamics as well as the influence of democracy and globalization.

The merits of the 'holy trinity' model need to be mentioned. For developing countries, a move towards privatization and liberalization is a positive step forward and should be commended. As was the case in some African countries, reforming the economy to undo the government's ownership of business and wealth concentration that stifles

incentives for private sector was a good thing. But government actions that fuel inefficiencies by excessive, improper government controls, uncompetitive policies and managerial incompetence are a very different thing from the government's positive intervention to facilitate the market mechanism, even correcting 'market failures' and generating economic dynamism. It is a grave mistake to confuse these two. Privatization and liberalization will not solve all the problems and will not be sufficient in themselves.

This is where disciplined, responsible and competent government leadership can make all the difference. While this seems to be a far cry from Africa's reality, it must be worked on, otherwise there is little chance that African countries will escape the trap of bad governance, inefficiencies and poverty.

The problems African states are faced with today mostly stem from inaction or non-implementation. And many African experts acknowledge this: "The real challenge is to just get on with "doing it" ... Most Africans understand that factors such as ethnicity or corruption have been big problems for the continent. But the real problems are at a full level below. They are foundational, and can only be addressed by a transformation that begins in the mind, in the way Africans *think*. Thinking is often more important than we think."⁸ The task of taking up the 'missing links' is all about genuinely committing to mindset change.

In the process of implementing the aforementioned formula for development, it is also important to keep things from reverting back to the negative realm. Progress made in this endeavour will have positive repercussions on the whole mechanism. It is no coincidence that Korea's development model reaped success, as it had the advantage of being action-oriented, pragmatic and strictly incentives-oriented.

Below, I will elaborate on the three important areas in the context of policy recommendations: the role of government and governance, education, and economic policy. So many recommendations, policy blueprints or technical studies, etc. have already been presented to Africa, and this is yet another. But the explanations and examples given here, which are easy to digest, do provide a valuable glimpse into Korea's

experience and highlights some fundamentals that are integral to national development and therefore that should be put to work in unison with each other.

The Role of the Government

For any country, the importance of the role of the government cannot be emphasized enough, particularly in the case of developing countries. The general characteristic or the strength of government bureaucracy is being 'impersonal' and 'rationalistic' in the way in which it functions. But the routinization of the work of government organizations tends to entail unintended problems if the people who run them become forgetful of the purpose they are supposed to serve. Government bodies will deviate from the public's expectations over time if conscientious efforts to 'humanize' and invigorate the bureaucracy are not made. That is why even in developed countries, there are constant calls for reforming and reinvigorating the government.

As for most of African states, considering their areas of weaknesses, the government mode must shift gears towards: (1) performance; (2) a rigorous disciplinary regime for civil servants; and (3) the introduction of a practical and comprehensive e-government system to enhance service and transparency, and to curb irregularities and corruption. For these, a sensible and practical evaluation system must be put in place. And it is important not to fall into 'legislature-institutional traps'; it is equally important to maintain a sense of balance as well as some degree of flexibility in upholding norms and regulations on the one hand and making things work on the other hand. Figure 10.7 provides an illustration of this.

Returning to the question of balance and flexibility, as is often the case in developing countries where certain regulations are non-existent or weak, they tend to 'copy and paste' or combine various regulations of developed countries to fill the void. But the problem is that these provisions can be too stringent or unrealistic for developing countries that do not yet have the necessary conditions or level of governance to match them.



Fig. 10.7 The desired mode of governmental reform for Sub-Saharan Africa

A case in point is that we see elaborate procurement laws in place in the Sub-Saharan African region, but because of their complex conditionality, this leads to delays in public projects, along with increases in costs, inefficiency and corruption. An example of this is Uganda's procurement regulation for public construction works, which requires at least nine months before the funds can be dispersed for the projects.⁹ People are either stuck in the regulations and waste so much time over technicalities, or they try to short-circuit the process by forging documents. A simple problem like potholes that should be repaired instantly is abandoned because of irrational procurement regulations. Laws and regulations in themselves do not prevent shoddy work; rather, it is the

supervision on the ground, work ethics and discipline that actually count in terms of getting things done.

Regarding the functioning of the state organization, the goal should be 'incremental progress'. While the mindset change and commitment for renovation in bureaucratic circles ought to be sought rigorously and promptly, the goals pursued should be realistic, continuous and long-term. The optimal outcome would be 'incremental progress'. Given the circumstances of Sub-Saharan African countries, setting overly ambitious targets for governmental transformation is most likely to fail. To gather momentum for such drive would require a strong political will and a national campaign supported by the people.

The 'back-tracking syndrome' that I have already mentioned is also prevalent in Sub-Saharan Africa's bureaucratic society. This is the result of the penchant of government officials for their personal interests vis-à-vis the public interest, a lack of discipline (such as negligence in their duties and absenteeism), a failure to report and follow through, etc.

Performance, discipline and e-governance should be considered as the 'tripod' for the governmental reform in Africa. The lessons of countries that industrialized early and 'developmental states' justify the need for well-functioning and credible government in Sub-Saharan African countries, and political leadership and consensus must gather force to push reform in this respect.

Basically, we can categorize governmental roles into three types: 'state-dominant', 'citizen-dominant' and 'diffused-dependent': The state-dominant type refers to the transformational states playing a strong role as 'facilitators' of development, prioritizing performance; the citizen-dominant type means the advanced and mature state of nations where citizens and the private sector have an important bearing on the output and quality of the state's functions, ensuring stability; and the diffused-dependent type refers to the case in which most Sub-Saharan African countries find themselves i.e. being neither state-dominant nor citizen-dominant, which literally means there is a weakness in both the government's role and the people's participation and contribution with respect to development. So, in comparison to the first two types, the last type does not have apparent advantages, showing a variety of weaknesses

like a tendency towards dependence on outside forces, continued poverty and the government's underperformance.

From this, we can deduce three different government orientations: politically oriented, performance-oriented and governance-oriented. The politically oriented kind is typical in most Sub-Saharan African countries: the government's attitude, engagement and day-to-day activities are driven more by political considerations and personal interests than by a true sense of duty to perform and deliver for the sake of the public interest. Executive functions are so closely knit to ruling party politics as well as the personal agendas of the powerful so that one can sense there is 'too much politics'; government departments conveniently serve as tools for politics in every way. The performance-oriented type is geared towards government output and is the hallmark of developmental states. The governance-oriented type, which is characteristic of developed countries, places priority on policy implementation and public service delivery in conformity with regulations and norms. Consistency, transparency and rationality, among other factors, are key measurements of success.

In reality, such distinctions would not be easy to make in an equally simple, clear-cut manner, and states will likely have to embody a mixture of different features. For the countries that need to catch up with the more developed countries, the primary role of the government should be spearheading development rather than maintaining the status quo. The prevailing thinking of established economies tends to view big governments and government interventions as something negative, causing distortions and inefficiencies in the economy. While this may be valid from the viewpoint of developed economies, it may not address the circumstances of developing countries.

Figure 10.8 shows various combinations of the intensity and orientations of the governmental role: on the *y*-axis, three different levels of government intervention—high, medium and low—are marked, while the horizontal axis indicates three types of government role orientation (political, performance and governance-oriented). A vast majority of Sub-Saharan African countries would belong to this category. As to whether or what countries in the region can be called developmental

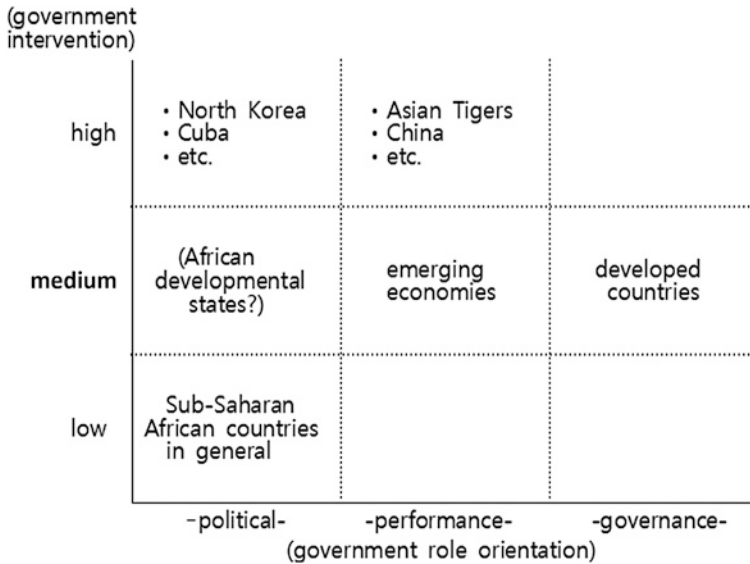


Fig. 10.8 Combinations of government intensity and orientation

states (the candidates can be such countries as South Africa, Rwanda and Botswana), the situation is unclear and debatable.

Also, what areas of government intervention we are talking about matters—it can be about only industrialization or the whole array of administrative tasks. Among the states with the highest levels of state intervention are countries like North Korea and Cuba. The actual placement of the countries in the matrix may vary when different criteria are applied. The same goes for governmental orientation. For instance, the orientation of a state's role can vary from sector to sector, and multiple orientations can concurrently exist. An example is Rwanda: the government's motivation is frequently seen to be political, economic, performance-oriented and governance-striving at the same time.

Given the necessity for African states to make their governments more functional, that is, being action-oriented, meeting the public's demands and policy goals, how to overhaul the structure and activities of government to make this possible needs to be considered. Once again, incentives and sanctions, sticks and carrots must be applied.

This requires a strong governing body or mechanism to supervise and enforce civil servants' compliance and delivery. We can start with the introduction of a regular 'mindset change' training of public officials and a tight regime of monitoring their performance.

Upgrading performance needs many things, like being focused, diligent and committed, while simple, routine administrative duties would only require steady work. But routine work is by no means a given in Sub-Saharan Africa, where civil servants' absenteeism and undertaking of multiple jobs is commonplace. But such behaviour on a broad scale should not be allowed to continue as it will only add to the vicious cycle of poverty and underperformance. Because of the widespread practice of negligence and corruption at the organizational level, if left unchecked, government institutions, especially those in the public service sector, will continue to deteriorate over time, becoming in themselves a serious problem for the nation.

For African countries that are in great need of transformational policy planning and execution across the board, the role of policy-makers and bureaucrats having the authority to carry out the necessary changes assumes particular importance. Institutions are weak in Africa, but the institutions themselves are moulded through the long-term accumulative practices of the nation. As such, the best way in which the development of African countries can be effectively driven is by starting with conscientious and calculated reforms within the government.

The government elites should be held to the highest standards in terms of upholding public interests. Officials undertaking the assignments must have pride, devotion and responsibility in serving their nation. The embedded 'sense of mission' to serve their nation ought to be the key attribute of bureaucratic elites, but unfortunately, this does not seem to be the case in Africa, as the majority of African elites are seen to have a weak sense of duty and responsibility, and often don't seem to know very well what they are supposed to do.

On the other hand, it might be unfair to denounce African elites for all of Africa's ills. The 'culture' and the demands of the people also undoubtedly play an important part in this. While the effectiveness of government rests with the ability of its officials, it is ultimately the people and public opinion that shape the outcome of governance. That is to

say, bureaucratic society does not function in a vacuum, but constantly interacts with, and is affected by, the environment and various entities, the most important of these being the people.

I have heard many African political, bureaucratic and business elites admitting dissatisfaction and frustration with their people. On their part, they complain that their constituents or their relatives back home expect too much from them and that this is unsustainable. Realistically, a certain balance should be sought between simply trying to 'conform' to the demands of the people and informing or educating them that not only is this not sustainable, but that is also detrimental to society. But the African elites are giving in and are opting for the former, while failing to challenge the public with respect to what is right, rational and beneficial from the long-term perspective.

'Cultural pressures' that have detrimental impacts on society need to be tackled responsibly and persistently. It is only fitting that the wealthy and privileged class of Africa, rather than being detached from their own environment, must assume greater social and moral responsibility for their nations. If the elites and intellectuals fail to take a stand and lead society forward in a positive fashion, society will likely remain stagnant.

Only when the government and the people look squarely at each other and share common ideas and objectives can the state function properly in the long term. It could be said that the political leaders are only as good as the people who chose them. Hence, it is crucial to empower the people to take genuine ownership of their lives and nationhood. This means cultivating people to be not only assertive of their rights and vigilant against government's exercise of power, but also to have a strong sense of the common good, social and moral values, and collective interests.

In developing countries in particular, and even in some Western countries, democracy is often being stretched to its limits. In some cases, it is 'abused' in such a way that people think they can do anything in the name of freedom and democracy. When the society's dominant pattern becomes too transactional and everyone is bent on immediate personal gains without some counterbalance of a broader, collective restraining social mechanism in place, 'freedom' is much more vulnerable. In the extreme case, this can entail a deep turmoil and national

crisis. Freedom and democracy are being stressed without equal emphasis on social and moral values and the maturity of the society to uphold civic standards and norms. In this respect, education, particularly in relation to civic duties, work ethics and development-mindedness, is of paramount importance.

The performance of government and the discipline of bureaucratic organization go hand in hand. In order for the government to deliver what the public requires, civil servants should be both motivated and disciplined with a sense that their goal and duty is to serve the public. To ensure this on a broader level, the general public should act as the ultimate vanguards to preserve and uphold the integrity, stability and prosperity of their nation. Parliament is expected to act as a check and balance vis-à-vis the executive body, but Parliament's competence and credibility is again dependent on the engagement and will of the people. It is on such grounds that I have gone to great lengths in this book to stress the need to build the social fabric, social capital, sense of nation and patriotism, and 'development-mindedness' in Sub-Saharan Africa.

In addition to the reorientation geared towards greater performance and discipline, e-governance can be added as the third pillar of governmental reform. The logic behind e-governance is that there is an enormous value in it for enhancing efficiency and transparency in administration and public services: it promotes discipline in government officials as the room for human error, irregularities or manipulation is greatly reduced, and illicit transactions in particular can be substantially curbed.

Korea has energetically promoted e-government as a central tool to make its government more competitive by capitalizing on its world's leading information and communications technology (ICT), including broadband Internet. The Korean government laid the groundwork for e-government schemes, such as the National Basic Information System (NBIS) computer networks in the 1980s, and streamlined applicable laws and institutions in the 1990s. It then made the implementation of e-government a major national agenda for the 2000s, concentrating on 11 major tasks for e-government (2001–2002) and 31 major tasks for

the e-government roadmap (2003–2007). With such proactive measures, e-government has become firmly established in all areas of the Korean government.¹⁰

The benefits of Korean e-government were visible and manifold: the efficiency and transparency of administrative work have both greatly improved; administrative civil services have been substantially enhanced; and people's access to and participation in the policy-making process has expanded. Korea's e-government initiative has become a success story of its own, and the effectiveness of its e-government is now acknowledged worldwide so that its various e-government systems are being exported to foreign countries. The UN Global E-Government Survey, held in 2010 and 2012, ranked Korea first among all the member countries, with the highest possible scores given in the categories of the Online Service Index and the e-Participation Index.¹¹

In Korea, what started as computerization of administrative work to reduce the workload (like handwriting) of civil servants in the context of the simplification of public documentation, developed into the overall informatization of the national administration and public service, after going through many different stages of informational platforms. Today, almost all work in government, both central and local, is computerized. The relative information is shared within the government and this is used to enhance the work efficiency of civil servants.

The ultimate goal of e-government or e-governance should be to realize a deepening of democracy through the enhancement of public service and the efficiency of public administration against the backdrop of the evolution of an information society. That is why the proliferation of e-government is regarded as synonymous with progress in governance. The technical advantage of e-government is that it can instantly carry out a number of tasks simultaneously with the least amount of effort and the lowest cost. This is evident in such a case as where a client does not need to visit a government office to get whatever service is required, but can instead use the Internet or visit portal sites to do the same. This makes personal contacts between civil servants and the public unnecessary, providing convenience to people while curtailing the possibility

of corruption that is likely to take place in face-to-face encounters. The openness and transparency with which communication and service are carried out promotes a positive atmosphere and outcomes.

The City of Seoul adopted the Online Procedures Enhancement for the Civil Application (OPEN) system, which is the digitalization of the process of producing authorizations and permits for citizens from the stage of application to issuance. The OPEN system is used for such areas as construction and sales, which are prone to solicitations, delays, irregularities, etc. By removing the necessity of personal contacts between city officials and the general public, the OPEN system effectively curtails the roots of corruption while promoting the transparency of the public administration. The public's satisfaction with the OPEN system service and civil servants is exceptionally high.¹²

Most developing countries do not seem to be ready to fully embrace a comprehensive program of e-government. Rather than wait for total readiness, an approach of learning by doing and consolidating small gains is recommended. But it is really up to African leaders and the people to make strategic decisions as to where they want to be heading. They should realize by now that e-governance is more than a technological trend and that it represents a genuine opportunity to attain qualitative, cost-effective government services and a better relationship between the government and the public. Its benefits can go beyond the efficiency of public service and administration to enhance good governance and empower citizens. Online systems for users have not only cut the time spent on processing applications and thereby increased the efficiency of transactions, but have also made them transparent, easily traceable and accessible.

The benefits that Sub-Saharan African countries can reap from e-government are deemed to be huge. E-government promotes efficiency and also helps people to break away from unwholesome temptations. While the fundamental way to do this is through the 'mindset change' of the people, a much simpler but practical means that can be employed alongside this endeavour is digitalization, or 'impersonal transactions' of public service. The positive effects of e-government can be immediate and far-reaching.

But corrupt rulers and the privileged class enjoying vested interests are likely to resist the full-scale application of this tool. There is an interesting story coming out of donor circles that a fragile African country that has become another sad story of state failure in the region had refused an offer by a donor country to have an e-government system installed for it. At first, the government welcomed this offer, but after it learned that the system was designed to curb illicit financial transactions by making everything transparent, which it did not want to happen, it apparently rejected it.

To install an e-government system throughout government departments and agencies that would have a palpable impact on the nation would require considerable resources and capacity. But this can be done even in poor countries with the will of the government. Rwanda is an example that is moving in this direction and is yielding actual results.

The three key ingredients mentioned that Sub-Saharan African countries need to adopt to strengthen and reform the government are performance, discipline and e-government. In pursuing these measures, it is also important to retain some degree of flexibility to make this possible in practice. Regulations should be observed, but the emphasis should be placed on how to get things done rather than on the formality and technical correctness. An appropriate outcome of such government 'reorientation' or reform will be 'incremental progress', because gradual, steady progress is the most realistic goal to achieve under the existing constraints. Setting an over-ambitious goal can easily derail well-intentioned efforts from the initial stages, and the key is to keep the momentum alive and avoid stalling which most often happens in Africa.

Making e-government work requires commitment, devotion, resources and the right mindset. And this boils down to mindset change. Nonetheless, investing in e-government can only have beneficial results in terms of enhancing governance, public services and the efficiency of administrations. For African countries, it is all the more advisable to pursue e-government as aggressively as possible, as it is the most practical and effective way to tackle the kind of widespread irregularities that the region suffers from.

Economic Policy

For any country, navigating the economy towards stability and growth is front and centre of all government policies and is the greatest pre-occupation of the state leaders. But sound management of economic affairs is all the more imperative for African countries that have widespread irregularities to contend with alongside the formidable task of overcoming poverty and achieving economic prosperity. But the reality is that serious, in-depth discussions and analysis in relation to African countries' economic policies have been driven mostly by international development organizations and donors.

Africa's economic growth was a mere 1.7% in 2016, lower than all other developing regions except Latin America and the Caribbean, placing the narrative of 'Africa Rising' into question (UNECA 2017). The joint report of the African Development Bank, the OECD and the UNDP, *African Economy Outlook 2017*, attributed this to low commodity prices, the sluggish performance of the global economy, the slowdown of growth in emerging economies like China, second-order effects of the Arab Spring, amplified by the prolonged conflict in Libya, and bad weather conditions such as droughts in some African countries.¹³ But African countries were expected to recover in the coming years thanks to a gradual rise in commodity prices, increasing private demand, including in domestic markets, sound macroeconomic policy management adopted by many countries, a generally improving business environment, etc.¹⁴ Also, Africa's advances in trade and regional integration were noted: over the last two decades, Africa's trade with the world has quadrupled; the continent's trading partners are more geographically diverse; and regional cooperation is gaining momentum. This is possible 'because African countries have adopted more open policies, invested in infrastructure and continued to pursue regional integration'.¹⁵

The report recommended that Africa diversify its exports to reduce exposure to commodity price shocks, improve the capacity of intra-Africa trade and focus on regional integration. While recognizing that human development is slow and uneven, political and economic

governance has shown some encouraging signs. According to the report: ‘the most recent data show improvements in Africa but also challenges to overcome. Governments are using public resources more efficiently and delivering more social services, thanks to regulatory reforms and digital innovations. They are also working to enhance the quality of the business environment to catalyse private sector investment’.¹⁶

The report also mentions that ‘promoting industrialization is back on Africa’s economic policy agenda, with renewed impetus and vigour’, but the strategy that about half of African countries are pursuing—which is to create labour-intensive industries to enhance job growth—does not address the needs of firms that have high growth potential. Governments should design strategies that remove the existing binding constraints on high-potential entrepreneurs; implementing productivity strategies requires full commitment, strong and far-sighted political leadership, efficient government coordination and active private-sector participation.¹⁷

UNECA’s *Economic Report on Africa 2017* offers a more straightforward and sobering look into the state of Africa’s economy that declined to a decade-low of 1.7% (1.4% for Sub-Saharan Africa) in 2016 from 3.7% in 2015, below the global average of 2.3%. It points out that African countries’ reorientation from an investment-led to a consumption-based economy has hit them through a fall in demand and also indirectly through lower global commodity prices. To make matters worse, African inflation rose from 7.5 to 10%, due to supply-side factors, rising electricity prices and falling values of currencies.¹⁸ Such weakness in both the supply and demand side of the economy, along with weaknesses in other economic fundamentals, make Africa’s transformational development that much more difficult to attain and place Africa into a position of greater dependence on its development partners and foreign investors.

Among many aspects of Africa’s social economy, what is of particular concern is a set of human elements: high population growth, low and subdued labour productivity, and rapid urbanization. It is projected that by 2035, Africa’s urban population rate will reach 49%, and ‘this shift has profound implications for achieving the continental and global targets for inclusive growth and transformation, including Agenda

2063 and the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. Theory and global experience show that urbanization and structural transformation are closely linked – but less so in Africa, which has largely followed its own urbanizing path weakly tied to structural transformation, including industrialization'.¹⁹

Sub-Saharan African countries have many challenges and obstacles to confront and overcome, and a long way to go to reach the position of a transformed economy free from poverty and enjoying sustainability, stability and prosperity. The issue with the economies of Sub-Saharan Africa is that there is no lack of policy vision and identification of their problems, as many policy recommendations have been made by various international and regional development organizations, often in conjunction with African states.

Coming up with fresh new recommendations on economic policy for Africa may not be easy. As Joong-Kyung Choi suggests, applying a 'one-size-fits-all' approach will be very difficult and unrealistic, while on the other hand, a 'Christmas tree' approach that suggests 'every challenge in every field should be solved at once ... is difficult to be implemented taking the government's capacity of the developing country into account'.²⁰ Choi points out that the desirable thing is to set priorities among the agenda items and then deal with them one by one. In Sub-Saharan Africa, there is the extra burden of pushing forward with multiple tasks at the same time to avoid regression or fall-back.

Economic policy recommendations for African countries in light of their reality, the lessons of Korean development and the global regime of economic governance can be classified into four categories: (1) macroeconomic stability; (2) effective industrialization; (3) human capacity development; and (4) reinvigoration of the market mechanism (economic principles having precedence over political considerations). In order for these recommendations to yield results, it should be matched by unrelenting determination and deeds. This all seems simple and clear, but contemplating on the grand scheme of inter-connecting and implementing these objectives, and actually delivering them are the hurdles that demand extraordinary efforts in order to be overcome.

Basically, I think that the countries can choose from the three options of 'low intensity', 'medium intensity', and 'high intensity' approaches:

the 'low intensity' option is more or less following the existing regime with improved efforts in basic areas like macroeconomic stability and good governance. The 'medium intensity' option is sort of a middle ground, while the 'high intensity' option is tantamount to vigorously pushing for full-scale transformational development similar to that which South Korea was able to do. The 'medium intensity' option can be described as that which in principle prescribes to the 'high intensity' approach, but, being 'restrained' by various conditions and limited in terms of national capacity, settles for the 'second-best' option.

These three options represents different levels of 'costs and benefits' or 'risks and rewards': the 'low intensity' approach is rather easy to pursue, without having to go through 'great pains', but its downside is that the 'benefits' or 'returns' will be modest, and the resulting change will be limited at best. On the other hand, the 'high intensity' alternative would be very demanding on nations, imposing a heavy burden on them on all fronts, but it could produce many great benefits if properly enacted.

The mainstream donor community and international organizations have not been avid champions of industrial policy for developing countries. Today, what is most frequently and widely stressed are macroeconomic stability, free markets and an open economy, a business-friendly environment, entrepreneurship, good governance, etc. Of course, macroeconomic stability is important for every country, but this and the free market system alone cannot ensure the substantive economic transformation of poor economies. Effective allocation of resources or production factors is a most basic condition for a well-functioning economy. But the more fundamental task for the poorest countries is how to achieve economic dynamism to broaden the economy in an expeditious manner.

In all fairness, the 'low intensity' approach is essentially a recipe for the status quo rather than evolution. Macroeconomic stability is the outcome of the accumulative work of managing inflation, interest rates, currency rates, deficits and the debt burden. It is what can be achieved by continued vigilance and prudent engagement by the authorities. With globalization and the high level of dependence of African countries on foreign resources, companies and markets,

African governments must have an equally high level of discipline in terms of managing macroeconomic stability.

Compared to the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, when Korea was able to achieve phenomenal economic growth, the international economy nowadays is more competitive, interdependent and inter-linked, while the global financial and trade regimes have become more binding on national governments, making the 'autonomous' pursuit of economic policies considerably more difficult for developing countries. Moreover, African countries now face less lenient international trade regimes than was previously the case. How much leeway African countries can have under the current economic regimes if they decided to push ahead aggressively with industrial policy and export promotion is unclear and would require a more detailed examination. And there can be a grey area between what is stipulated in theory and allowed in practice. But for the poor economies in the region, there should still be quite a number of possibilities of which to take advantage and many ways to navigate through the situation if they are seriously committed to doing so.

Perhaps there is a fourth option: the 'incremental change' approach. The goal here would be to first reach the 'low intensity' target of macroeconomic stability and sound governance, but rather than stopping there, moving on to the next phase of meaningful industrialization and then to high-end industrialization and a service sector economy. The goal for every nation would be to enjoy growth and stability at the same time.

Korea started out in the early 1960s with an aggressive export promotion and economic growth policy, followed by a policy of gearing-up HCIs in the 1970s. But Korea had to pay more attention to economic stability during the process of economic development. Overall, Korea's 'high intensity' development approach was about growth first and then stabilization afterwards. Since the 1990s, Korea has been trying to balance the two, with special lessons learned from the 1997 IMF financial crisis and the 2008 global financial crisis on the need to manage financial transactions and markets.

In relation to industrial policy, Korea provides an example of fundamental but long-forgotten lessons of industrialization: that an economy has to undergo different stages of policy orientations in order to

attain full-scale development. For Korea, each phase was extraordinarily clear-cut: (1) post-war national rehabilitation (the 1950s); (2) laying the foundations for a 'self-supporting' economy (the 1960s); (3) upgrading the industrial structure and modernizing the rural sector (the 1970s); (4) shifting towards openness and liberalization (the 1980s); and (5) espousing globalization and structural reforms (the 1990s).

Korea's situation in the aftermath of independence and the Korean War was not very different from that which Sub-Saharan African countries faced upon their independence. But what sets Korea apart from African countries is that Korea was able to fulfil all the stages of economic development following the path of industrialization of developed economies, albeit in a very compressed manner.

In the case of Sub-Saharan African countries, it seems evident that of these five phases, phase 2 and phase 3 have not properly taken place. The relevant policies have not been effectively pursued in a timely and systemic manner, and the countries have thereby missed many opportunities. African countries have opened up their economy, liberalized the market and privatized companies without fully understanding the implications of doing so. Without taking up crucial tasks of laying the foundations for a 'self-supportive' economy and pushing for industrialization and rural development, they have opted for an easier solution of opening up and liberalizing. In so doing, they have essentially outsourced most of the components needed for a successful national economy.

As a consequence, all kinds of policy goals are pursued in juxtaposition, complicating efforts and compounding the already challenging tasks. Still, many African countries have not completed laying the groundwork for statehood and economic development. Korea achieved rapid growth based on the solid cornerstones of development: land reform, socio-economic mobilization and empowerment of the people, the creation of various agencies, proactive government initiatives, etc., and these turned out to be vital 'building blocks'. More important was the actual follow-up actions to these plans.

But instead of exercising true ownership of their economy, Sub-Saharan African countries have frequently taken a regressive and deleterious stance. After a half-century of independence, many African leaders are still blaming the influence of colonialism and international

environment for their economic failures. Apart from the lack of grand economic schemes, the post-independence African economy suffered severely from a deficiency of participation and support from various indigenous players and sectors. Unlike Korea, which made the most of what little resources it had in laying the groundwork and setting up bodies for national development, African states wasted their precious resources and opportunities through inaction, misconduct and missteps.

Sub-Saharan African nations received more financial inflows and aid grants in the context of development assistance than any other region in the world. The tasks they faced—uniting the nation, providing security, achieving economic growth and welfare, democratization and good governance, etc.—are the basic things that the leaders and people of every country have to assume as their own responsibility. The African problems have been caused not by acts of nature and irresistible forces, but by human failings. African leaders readily invoke sovereignty or non-interference in domestic matters, but when it comes to economic problems, they are quick to put responsibility on external causes and colonial legacies, Western imperial designs and so on.

On the flip side of Africa's energetic open-arms policy towards foreign investors, there is a disquieting reality of dependency and opportunism by the 'well-connected' for rent-seeking. 'Upper-echelon' African business circles seem to have evolved in an unwholesome manner. Rather than trying to be entrepreneurial and competitive in their own right by showing commitment, making investments and taking risks on their own, many seem to want to act as 'middlemen' in order to gain short-term profits or windfall gains.

The common challenges facing Sub-Saharan African countries are rapid urbanization amid a population explosion, acute unemployment for the youth and college graduates, etc. But the overarching problem is the myopic thinking when it comes to business, often being seriously blindsided and, worse still, not really doing the things that need to be done. Sub-Saharan African countries have no shortage of policy papers, road maps and master plans laying out 'what is lacking', 'what is to be achieved' and 'what is the way forward'. But the persistent problem is always the implementation, and it reverts back to intent, commitment

and practice. The question is: how much are elites and the privileged class conscious of public interests, and how patriotic and devoted are they to contributing to the improvement of lives of their compatriots beyond their own personal gains?

Jennifer Blake compared Africa and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and pointed out that there are three aspects of the ASEAN growth experience that can provide useful lessons for Africa. First, ASEAN countries have made many of the reforms and investments needed to ensure longer-term prosperity; measurable progress has been achieved across the region in terms of tearing down red tape and putting in place institutions, educational systems and infrastructure. Over the past four decades, they have improved their productivity by diversifying their economies rather than depending on volatile commodity prices. Second, they have been much more successful in regional integration compared to African countries, recognizing that in a rapidly evolving global context, they must join forces to reap the economies of scale. Third, economic outcomes are driven by positive expectations: 'In much of Asia there is an inherent belief that countries will experience rapid economic progress – of course driven by past experience but also a general confidence in the future – and this tends to reinforce a positive self-fulfilling prophecy. Greater confidence in the future would be a boon in Africa, which is particularly at risk due to the present slowdown.'²¹

When all approaches stumble time after time, then it is likely that something simple and basic rather than something very complex and technical has gone wrong. When everybody, including development experts, is looking everywhere to find reasons, the ultimate answer may lie in the fundamentals, like being steady and consistent. I concur with David Henley's view that what successful development strategies aim to do is 'to alleviate poverty on a massive scale (outreach), with great *speed* (urgency), and with a pragmatic and sometimes ruthless eye for *simplicity* (expediency)'.²²

Returning to the development path of Korea, post-war national rehabilitation self-supporting' economy most Sub-Saharan African countries have barely fulfilled even a few of them. African countries have

seemingly 'jumped' to phases (4) and (5) without properly fulfilling steps (1), (2) and (3). And the steps taken ((4) and (5)) are not perfect either. The first three stages indeed require arduous work and are by no means rudimentary. The post-war national rehabilitation era of Korea should approximate the early period of post-independence of African countries. All-out efforts in nation-building should have been made at this time, with a renewed sense of national identity and unity translated into a vigorous institutionalization of state structures and a push for modernization, but apparently this has not happened in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Most Sub-Saharan African countries have not completed nation-building and laying the foundations for economic development, hence, the next step—upgrading the industrial structure and modernizing the rural sector—is still far from reach. When the countries under this 'premature' state merely open up markets, they can drift further away from the desired path of development, with the outcome that we see today: a commodity-dependent economy, the domination of multi-national corporations and foreign companies, the underdevelopment of the agricultural sector, a meagre manufacturing industry, a huge informal economy, snowballing youth unemployment, rising debt, widespread corruption, etc.

There is still a tendency for African rulers to complain about the 'unfair treatment' of Africa by the West. They do so when they benefit vastly from, and rely so heavily on, aid, funds, investments and business operations from rich nations. An East African state leader pointed out that Africa is on the rise and 'even as we rise, the international system maintains an irrational unjust structure that relegates Africa to [the] periphery, that defends injustice and double standards as a matter of course, and, which impoverishes us'. He questioned the dividends of globalization and implored African leaders to look more inwardly by promoting intra-African trade for its people's prosperity in a 'rigged international system', adding that 'even in the face of an international order stacked against us, built on our backs, Africans have made painful progress'.²³

Besides pointing out the need for African regional integration, it has also become fashionable for African countries to create industrial parks in a bid to attract investments and form industrialization hubs. But due to poor infrastructure, administrative hurdles, a lack of available materials and skilled labour, corruption, a lack of capable local partners, etc., this has mostly not materialized in any satisfactory way.

We have discussed macroeconomic stability and industrialization. Now we turn to human capacity, which includes entrepreneurial skill with the emphasis on management capacity, as well as the quality of the workforce in general. The surest way to move towards an industrialized economy is to have local, home-grown companies flourish and expand, with local businessmen having true ownership of their business. For this to occur, a major increase in skilled workforce and competent management that will support the expanding businesses and economic growth is necessary. But what is clearly the weakness is 'management capacity'. There is a very good chance that the threshold of transformation will be reached when the overall managerial capability of the people is enhanced. Figuring out what holds this capacity back and how it can be substantially raised will be a game changer for sure.

Sung-Hee Jwa stresses that it is not the market but enterprises that are the most important driving force for economic growth in developing countries. He rebukes the theory of the 'invisible hand' of the free market mechanism, arguing that thriving companies are the answer to successful industrialization and that, without them, developing countries will remain as agrarian societies.²⁴

So, what are the conditions for indigenous or local companies to successfully emerge as competitive and sustainable businesses? The productivity which allows the quantity and quality of commodities and services, as well as the managerial skills that render this possible, readily comes to mind. The reason why there are so few prominent 'native' enterprises in the region is because of the lack of such capabilities. In this regard, what African governments can take away from Korea's experience is that the government must do much more and must fundamentally reposition itself from being an 'onlooker' to taking the helm in relation to industrial planning and the promotion of business and economic growth.

The restraints on the competitiveness of Sub-Saharan African countries are mostly human factors, and hence they can be tackled. A prevalent problem is the poor work or low credibility of the workforce. Supervision is a very demanding and arduous task, and this pushes up costs in terms of extra time, labour and money spent. Basically, it is an innate issue of individuals rather than being structural or externally influenced, but the accumulative impact on the economy is huge. At the institutional or organizational level, rampant corruption and unhealthy practices, such as public officials openly engaging in private business, further undermines the overall economic efficiency of the countries in the region.

To put things into perspective, the opportunities were always there for the taking. I have heard political leaders in the region citing successes that the Indian business communities have been able to reap in eastern and southern Africa over so many decades, while deploring the fact that their own people do not exert themselves in the same way; others have pointed out that the Lebanese expatriates have been doing the same all over western Africa. It is not mere commercial savvy, but, more importantly, hard work, commitment, discipline and perseverance that determine the outcome of business. Ideas and plans are only as good as their implementation. And implementation hinges on what I have termed ‘development-mindedness’: knowledge, practising, ownership and passion (KPOP).

Education in Ethics and Mindset Change

When we are dealing with a magnanimous goal like changing the course of a nation, people should embrace it wholeheartedly, and it is always good to begin with a sound education. The progress of Sub-Saharan African countries thus far is disappointing, considering how much potential they have, but how little they have advanced over the decades in terms of strengthening their social, economic and political fabric. The international community which has struggled in terms of its development endeavours on Africa, should also reflect on whether there had not been blind-spots in its methods rather than just go about doing business the same way.

This calls for objective, cool-headed reassessment of Africa's problems. And it should begin with a recognition of the nature of the problems. What kind of a response is needed would depend on the nature of the problem. If the problem is technical, it would require a technical approach. If it is more fundamental and deep-seated, it should be approached differently, in the context of 'tailored response'. But in order to be able to do this, countries must recognize their problem as such and also accept the required means.

Anyone who has worked on African development ought to understand that what is required in terms of addressing the nature of the challenges facing Africa is not simply distributive, welfare or poverty-relief types of responses. It is not only about a 'lack of capacity' either. Rather, the answer lies elsewhere, at a different level: *the mindset and behaviour of the people*. There seems to be a big gap between what is desired and what is necessary. Changes will come when people understand how wealth is created and through what process it can be reproduced and sustained. The blind-sights or negligence have continued for so long because no meaningful evolution in terms of the mindset has occurred.

From the development partners' perspective, there can be an issue of 'short-memory', a short cycle and turnover of projects, frequent shifts in the officials in charge, etc. They could also be 'captured' or entrenched in their own systems, without themselves knowing that this is the case. People could make the mistake of treating such subjects like people's mindset and culture as taboos on the premise that these are intrinsically unchangeable. But as I have already pointed out, cultural heritage, identity and traditions that are objects of national pride and hence need be cherished should not be confused with 'social behaviourism' that can and should evolve over time when necessary. Development itself is about evolution, and hence sticking rigidly to old habits is counter-productive in terms of development and is tantamount to self-denial of improvement. People cannot have it both ways: 'comfort' and 'progress' are mutually exclusive. I deplore it when I see people complaining and even indulging in self-pity when they are willing to do so little to help themselves.

Development means changing for the better. That is why we have education, public campaigns, activist movements and so on. Today's degradation of the natural environment, increasing security threats and growing competition in business, among other factors, demand change on the part of the people, even if only for their survival, let alone from the perspective of development. The logic of social development, people's empowerment, as well as economic principles, should serve as the basis for healthy politics; it should not be the other way round, where everything is being driven by political considerations.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, so many things break down and deteriorate in everyday life that such phenomena are accepted as normal. Self-regulating or correcting mechanisms in society are feeble, and responses to public requirements, accidents, crimes, natural disasters and contingencies are not swiftly and effectively taken, and are sometimes grossly neglected. Expectations of and trust in the public service is very low, and the general sense of people's powerlessness and detachment from the country's centres is perceived to be widespread. Even the elites and the privileged class have their fair share of frustrations and uneasiness in relation to their society.

But the vast majority of people seem to accept the reality with a 'subsistence' mindset and, as a result, society is bogged down in a languid state. You rarely see any expressions of social outrage or calls for fundamental change in the form of large-scale public demonstrations and campaigns. In certain countries, we see demonstrations and strikes all too often, but these are almost entirely protests against poor public services, labour unions demanding better wages and the poor demanding more welfare.

Moreover, activist movements that are energetically pursued are not in evidence either. Under the circumstances, Africa's politics have managed to adapt to the reality in their own way, not in strengthening governance and fabric of the society, and empowering the people, but by following a 'minimalist' strategy and catering to the people's needs that remain largely subsistence-oriented.

Problems stemming from the weak fundamentals of civil society, like people's sense of themselves and their community, civic values, work ethics, etc., that pertain to the realm of human development should

be recognized and dealt with in a serious fashion and should not be left to be addressed in the political context or politicized. The international community also has to be careful of the traps of taking a political approach from their end. Mainstream partners sometimes make the mistake of focusing on what is nominal and lose sight of the issues that plague Africa's development.

The ills of an overdose of politics are consequential: diversion of attention to politics; loss of opportunities to engage in issues of more substance, like work culture and work ethics; dependency on politics and political figureheads; division and fragmentation of society stemming from politics, etc. The profound harm done is that the people, especially the rural population and the youth, become so dependent on politicians and assistance from the state that they lose any motivation to work and take ownership of their lives.

The workings of the elite class, entrepreneurs and foreign partners, under the given circumstances, will not be sufficient in themselves for the countries to overcome poverty in a transformative fashion, regardless of how many resources may be injected. It is the broad section of the masses, the ordinary people that have to be empowered and enlightened. Only then will African societies be able to enjoy sustainable development and prosperity. In order for this to occur, the expectations and ambitions of individuals for their lives must also be raised substantially. Without people's sense of self-esteem and pride, expectations for a better tomorrow and, most importantly, the willingness to take on responsibilities, all the endeavours made will most likely end up achieving little.

So, how can countries turn around the degradation of people's values and the sense of ownership in their lives and work ethics? The only logical answer that I can find is through education in ethics, human and social development emphasizing the need for dynamic change. There should be a boldness to include in the curriculum the resocialization or reorientation of existing modes. African nations ought to take this matter very seriously and wholeheartedly and carry out the entire task forcefully. This is the field where the role of donors can be vague and limited, as it will be an uncharted territory for the traditional donor community.

Korea provides a good set of examples of mindset change initiatives that Africans may find relevant and appealing. In a sense, such endeavours can be considered as the nation-building process, and hence for developing countries, there is great value in conscientiously launching them in a campaign-like fashion. Development is about changing for the better and people cannot expect positive things to happen when they are not willing to change themselves. Korea's experience in this field offers a worthy example from which countries can readily take inspiration.

Ethics has been taught in Korean schools as a regular subject on the curriculum since 1955, when the relevant provision was enacted. Along with ethics, an early vocational course called 'practical arts' (*shilkwa*) was also established in the same year. Both of these are still taught in Korean schools. The subject of ethics in primary schools is called *barun-senghwal* or 'right habits of life', in secondary schools *dodeok* or 'ethics' and in universities it was called *kokminyoonli* or 'national ethics' up to the mid-1990s, but later changed to 'ethics'. It started with the purpose of teaching the basic morals like attitudes of individuals befitting dutiful members of society, patriotism and a law-abiding spirit, responsibility towards one's family members, etc.²⁵

Furthermore, in 1968, in an effort to solidify the foundation of a national ethics and ethos, the Charter of National Education was promulgated by the Korean President. The reason for its promulgation was because of the need to address various shortcomings of the nation: Korea's valuable traditions and heritage were not being followed and advanced; there were imbalances or disharmony between material development and people's value systems, the latter lagging behind the former; people lacked a sense of state, society and national identity; and national education indicators were ambiguous, while spiritual and ethical education was being neglected.

The Charter's main body is broken down into three parts emphasizing: the pride and duty of the Korean nation; norms and virtues in everyday life; and national unification and evolution of democracy. The sentiments underpinning the charter are: (1) the establishment of a national identity; (2) the creation of a new national culture through

harmony between tradition and progress; and (3) the development of democracy by means of harmonization of individuals and the state.²⁶

In the 1990s, the Charter was removed from Korean textbooks. As for the ethics course, although it has been maintained for a long time, it is gradually being phased out, reflecting political and social changes in Korea. For example, 'national ethics' was dropped from exams to recruit civil servants in 1994. In more recent years, since 2014, ethics is no longer taught in high schools. Although the economic achievements of Korea during the 'developmental dictatorship' era are undeniable, Korean people living in a different era of democratization, a pluralistic society and in a situation of economic prosperity tend to hold a more sophisticated or critical view of past events and legacies.

But the mindset change, moral and work ethics-oriented initiatives that Korea undertook should not be dismissed easily as being out of touch with today's reality. These can be all the more relevant in developing countries. In fact, Korea's public or state-led mindset change and ethics campaign did not come out of nowhere, but had deep roots in Korea's history and society. Korea, having undergone a process of economic, political and social evolution, has placed greater emphasis on public service and ethics codes for civil servants and politicians.

The Canaan Farmers School is reputed to have positively contributed to development by spearheading changes in its own way. Founded in 1931, the Canaan Farmers School methodology is said to have been adopted later in the model of the New Village Movement, the *Saemaul Undong*, which was launched in 1970.

This school's ideas are about making people disciplined, voluntary, active, hard-working, forthright, ethical, frugal and responsible as individuals and community members. It tries to instil the 'I work first, I serve first, I sacrifice first' mentality in people, with the motto of 'let's learn until we know, let's devote ourselves to work, let's serve in humility'. It has an eye-catching slogan that is emblematic of its ethos: 'do not eat to eat, but eat to work. If you don't like to work, do not eat. Work at least four hours for each meal'.²⁷

The school also teaches ‘mindset pioneering’: that it is all up to the people to get things done, so they should have a positive ‘can-do’ spirit. Individuals are urged to wake up early before dawn to start the day, and changing oneself for the better, being passionate and faithful pioneers and the need to maintain one’s own good health are also emphasized.²⁸

The logic of the school’s approach is that while various projects for poverty eradication and sustainable development are necessary, it is more important to educate leaders who will effectively drive these projects forward and have the ability to lead others. The basic component of leadership training is mindset transformation based on the belief that a person can change only when his or her mind changes. The task here is to make the changes in mindset embedded in the personality of trainees so that they will act differently, in a more positive manner. The expected benefits are twofold: the creation of model communities of poverty eradication based on mindset transformation and raising leaders who practise and live out the changed mindset.²⁹

The founder of the Canaan movement, Kim Yong-ki (1909–1988), spent his whole life cultivating barren land and enlightening farmers during Korea’s most difficult times of Japanese occupation and the post-war periods when the nation was suffering from extreme poverty and hunger. He said:

For a country like ours, learned people must get involved in agriculture. Agriculture is the core of all industries. But on the contrary, learned people are avoiding agriculture and only ignorant rural people have been working as farmers. This has kept our nation’s economy and civilization primitive, resulting in loss of our sovereignty to Japan. To recover our sovereignty, we must gain economic independence. And for that, there is no other way but for the learned to get involved in agriculture and increase food production.³⁰

He would also say: ‘Don’t tell people to work but be the one to work first’, ‘Don’t just keep your appearance clean but keep your heart clean’, ‘If you don’t like to work, do not eat’, ‘Take courage, my country’, ‘You will reap as you sow’, ‘Young men, go to the countryside’, ‘Do good and do not lose hope’ and ‘Be the pioneer to change your fate’.

Kim Yong-ki's extraordinary passion to fight against the odds and break 'the status quo' by tackling head-on what could be extremely onerous and almost impossible, but essential undertakings for transformative development—changing the mindset of people—is remarkable. It is said that his thoughts and conviction on the Canaan Farmers movement were rooted in his Christian faith. In any case, from the perspective of development, I think that 'his thoughts and deeds form imperative basis for mindset transformation of leaders in developing nations'.³¹

According to the Canaan Farmers School, immediately after General Park Chung-Hee took power following a military coup in 1961, he visited the school. When he visited the school again in March 1962, he is said to have remarked 'we led a political revolution, but you led a lifestyle revolution'. In April 1962, hundreds of district leaders led by the Vice Minister of Home Affairs came to the school for training.³²

The Canaan Farmers School seems to have strongly inspired President Park to envision and launch the *Saemaul Undong*, the New Village Movement, in 1970.³³ As the school was increasingly recognized at the start of the 1970s, it attracted not only farmers but increasingly people from all walks of life, including soldiers, civil servants, businessmen, professionals, college and high school students. As a result, the school's facilities and training courses were also expanded. Over time, the curriculum went through some changes in its content to reflect the changes in reality of Korea, but the mindset-change approach and the heritage of farmers' education continued to be its central component.

Notes

1. Abraham Maslow, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature* (New York: Viking Press, 1971).
2. In this sense, it could be said that South Korea's sense of nation and national identity was a 'pre-existing condition' at the time that the 'modernization of motherland' drive was launched in the early 1960s.
3. Sung-Hee Jwa (2015).

4. David Booth and Diana Gammack, *Governance for Development in Africa* (London: Zed Books, 2013), pp. 3–4.
5. Kingsley Chiedu Moghalu, *Emerging Africa* (London: Penguin Books, 2014), p. 6.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 6–7.
7. Patrick Katagata, ‘Why Africa Has Failed 50 Years After Independence’, *Daily Monitor* (Uganda), 9 May 2017, p. 14.
8. Kingsley Chiedu Moghalu (2014), p. 305.
9. Allen Kagina, the Executive Director of Uganda National Road Authority, was commenting, as a discussant, on Uganda’s problems during the 25th Joseph Mubiru Memorial Lecture with Keynote Speaker Ha-Joon Chang on 1 December 2017, Serena Hotel, Kampala, Uganda.
10. National Information Society Agency (NIA), e-Government of Korea: Best Practices (Seoul: NIA, 2012), p. 4, <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/UNGC/UNPAN043625.pdf>; see also Special Committee for e-Government, Republic of Korea, *Korea’s e-Government: Completion of e-Government Framework* (e-Government White Paper) (2003), pp. 8–16.
11. *Ibid.*
12. MOK Jin-hue, ‘E-Government and Transparency of Public Administration’, 28 April 2008, <http://humanarchive.tistory.com/295>.
13. Africa Development Bank, OECD Development Centre, UNDP, *African Economic Outlook 2017, Special Theme: Entrepreneurship and Industrialization* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2007), pp. 23–25.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 27–29.
15. African countries’ more open policies, investment in infrastructure and continued pursuit of regional integration have eased business activities and also increased the continent’s appeal as a partner in global trade, according to *African Economic Outlook 2017*.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
17. *African Economic Outlook 2017* offers three suggestions for easing the constraints that most entrepreneurs in Africa are confronted with: first, to strengthen skills and meet the needs of labour market, it is necessary to implement public policies that prioritize formal education, apprenticeships, vocational training and managerial capabilities; second, policies that support business clusters can help raise the productivity and growth of firms, including smaller ones; and, third, financial market policies can increase firms’ access to innovative and tailored sources of finance.

18. United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), *Economic Report on Africa 2017: Urbanization and Industrialization for Africa's Transformation* (Addis Ababa: ECA, 2017) pp.2–3.
19. *Ibid.*, executive summary xx.
20. Joon-Kyung Choi, *Upside-Down Success Story of Korea's Economic Development* (Seoul: Daewon Publishing, 2013), translated by Christy Hyun-Joo Lee, p. 180.
21. Jennifer Blanke, Chief Economist, World Economic Forum, 'From Kigali to Kuala Lumpur: What Will It Take for Africa to Follow South-East Asia's Development Path?', 31 May 2016, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/05/from-kigali-to-kuala-lumpur-what-will-it-take-for-africa-to-follow-southeast-asia-s-development-path/>.
22. David Henley (2015), p. 178.
23. Statement by Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta on 19 November 2016 during the 2nd annual Diplomatic Black Tie dinner in Kampala (reports by *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* on 21 November 2016).
24. Sung-Hee Jwa's paper 'Korea in Crisis Asking Park Chung-Hee for Answers' (Korean), presented at the symposium held by the Park Chung-Hee Foundation on 15 June 2016.
25. *Doosan Encyclopedia* (Korean), <http://terms.naver.com/entry.nhn?docId=1082774&cid=40942&categoryId=31723>.
26. The Academy of Korean Studies—Research Information Service of Korean Studies (RINKS).
27. The slogans of the Canaan Farmers School are as follows: (School ideas) I work first. I serve first. I sacrifice first; (School motto) Let's learn until we know. Let's devote ourselves to work. Let's serve in humility; (Table manners) Do not eat to eat, but eat to work. If you don't like to work, do not eat. Work at least four hours for each meal; (Mindset) Mindset Pioneering! Pioneering Mindset! We are still young. Much work to do. Let's make it done. It can be done. Wake up the dawn. The people are calling for us. Let's go to Canaan; (Change) Change myself first. Change now first. Change here first. Change small things first. Change doable things first. Change until the end; (Pioneers) Pioneers must be dreamers. Pioneers must be confident. Pioneers must be strong-willed and patient. Pioneers must be brave and decisive. Pioneers must sweat and weep. Pioneers must be knowledgeable. Pioneers must be committed. Pioneers must be dedicated. Pioneers must be devoted. Pioneers must run. Pioneers must maintain a peaceful family. Pioneers are not born overnight. Pioneers must be passionate and faithful; (Sweat) I

have seen my sweat on the forehead. I confirmed my sweat. The less I sweat, the more I weep; The more I sweat, the less I weep; (Health) If I lose money, I lose a little; If I lose honour and credit, I lose much; If I lose health, I lose all. Health is the only thing I cannot borrow from others. The failure, frustration, and hopelessness I suffer today is the result of the time I spent badly yesterday; The success, joy, and hope I enjoy today is the reward of the time I spent well yesterday; (Today) Today is the first day of the rest of the days left. Today is the first day of the rest of my life; (Wake up) Let's wake up the dawn. Let's start the dawn. Let's welcome the dawn; (Take courage) Take courage, my country. Take courage, my people.

28. Canaan Farmers School (Wonju) website <http://www.canaanin.or.kr>; KIM Bum II, *Achievers Are Believers* (Seoul: Kyujangmunwha, 2008) (Korean), pp. 12–20.
29. Introductory briefings from Canaan School of Farming (Wonju) during the author's visit to the school on 12 May 2011.
30. Canaan Global Leadership Centre, 'Introduction to Canaan Global Leadership Centre', 29 May 2010, <https://sites.google.com/site/canaangloballeadership>.
31. *Ibid.* The Canaan Farmers School is now engaged in projects for many developing countries.
32. *Ibid.*
33. According to the Canaan Farmers School, 66,000 male and female leaders were appointed to represent 33,000 villages around the nation and work diligently for their villages without any monetary reward. The one-week-long camp training for these leaders first took place in the end of January 1972 at the Saemaul Leadership Institute, which adopted the curriculum from the Canaan Farmers School. While the programme helped the trainees with new knowledge for agriculture, the Canaan Farmers School noted that most testified that the Canaan-style mindset training was most helpful. Initially targeted at rural leaders, the *Saemaul Undong* training was expanded to include urban area projects in 1973 and male and female *Saemaul* leaders from cities were sent to one-week-long *Saemaul Undong* training programmes as well. Later in 1974, further expansion of the programme included the training of high-level central government officials, administrative ministers, university professors, members of the media, entrepreneurs, artists, religious leaders, etc. The Canaan Farmers School observed that the *Saemaul Undong* training played a crucial role as a means of national mindset training.

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