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The complex relationship between government and NGOs in international development cooperation: South Korea as an emerging donor country

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ABSTRACT

The South Korean government has sought an active partnership with domestic NGOs in pursuing international development cooperation. Their partnership can be categorized in two ways. One, the more common type, is that NGOs work with government offices by participating in established programs. In the second type of partnership, NGOs take a more independent position when important policy agendas are determined and often push the government to move in certain directions. Vibrant Korean NGOs usually align with more liberal rules and norms of foreign aid governance and advocate for these to their own government. The relationship between the government and NGOs in the area of development cooperation is essentially a partnership, as technical expertise and overseas aid allocation move their interaction away from divisive domestic politics. We named this partnership a "complex relationship" in which both functional and critical interactions occur. Three different types of relations – supplementary, complementary, and sometimes adversarial – co-exist across four interactive areas: volunteering services, development project implementation, development education, and policy advocacy.

Introduction

The active participation of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in foreign aid is facilitated with the setback of official development assistance (ODA) from major donor countries. Due to the financial crisis in developed countries and the global economic recession in the 1980s, “aid fatigue” increased and the neoliberal standpoint began to form the frame for development cooperation. This period of the 1980s served as momentum for the rising third sector to participate in foreign aid and for the increase in NGOs’ activities, which continued into the 1990s. Service-providing international NGOs, in particular, working closely with international organizations and private foundations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, have emerged as the most important type of private donor. As NGOs’ participation and contribution increased, major reports such as Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Co-operation by the OECD Development...
Assistance Committee (DAC) began to emphasize partnership between government and NGOs (OECD, 1996). In 2008, at the Third High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness held in Accra, civil society was recognized as an important independent actor in supplementing efforts of the government and the private sector. The Accra Agenda for Action called for strengthening the links with civil society to build more effective and inclusive partnerships (OECD, n.d.).

This period for international society trying to reform aid governance overlapped with the critical juncture of the South Korean government's new approach to foreign aid. The Lee Myung-bak government (2008–2013) viewed foreign aid as an important pillar of foreign policy, emphasizing global contribution. Under the slogan of “Global Korea,” the Lee government vowed to increase ODA volume by 2015 to 0.15% of gross national income (GNI). Although the previous Roh Moo-hyun government had prepared the application for OECD DAC membership, with the approval of DAC membership in November 2009, the Lee government pushed for more vigorous ODA and in 2010 passed the Framework Act on International Development Cooperation, which governed Korean ODA (Choi, 2010). Furthermore, hosting the Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF-4) in Busan in 2011, Korea played an instrumental role in proposing the idea of “development effectiveness.” This forum endorsed a “global partnership” for effective development cooperation. In this partnership, the roles and close coordination of all development actors were emphasized (OECD, 2011). In particular, civil society was able to include a number of major claims in the realm of human rights, gender equality, high-quality jobs, etc., by participating in the creation of the outcome document of the Busan HLF-4 (KoFID, 2012).

This article analyzes how the Korean government and NGOs have been interacting since the Korean government promoted a proactive aid policy. Korean NGOs emerged as influential policy actors and service providers after the democratization of 1987. They have been particularly active in advocating alternative public policies and in monitoring activities as watchdogs against political corruption and economic injustice (Choi & Yang, 2011; Lee & Arrington, 2008; Shin & Chang, 2011). In doing so, advocacy NGOs have often developed contentious relations with government and big business. Unlike other policy areas, however, international development cooperation has invited less conflict due to its essential nature of resource provision to partner countries’ citizens for humanitarian causes. In this regard, NGOs already working for development cooperation or other domestic NGOs in service delivery have been invited to participate in government-funded programs. At the same time, advocacy NGOs entered the development field and began to promote the norms of the international development community. They have approached ODA from a humanitarian perspective and advocated the principle of local ownership. Accordingly, the GO-NGO relationship in the development field is evolving toward what we call a “complex relationship” that deserves conceptual analysis. In a complex relationship, different partnership patterns occur depending on the various spheres of activity. These multifaceted features can be simultaneously integrated rather than one specific model.

**Government and NGO relations**

Before specifically discussing the relations between the Korean government and NGOs, let us review the existing literature on the overall relations between government and NGOs.
While the models differ depending on the specific area and the larger political environment where their interactions occur, they are useful in developing appropriate types of GO-NGO relations.

Theoretical background

The partnership between government and NGOs can be well understood against the background of “three-failures theory.” The seminal work of Weisbrod (1972, p. 2) explained the creation of nonprofit organizations from the failure of government to meet public service needs. Public demands are too diverse and heterogeneous for government to deliver all the services voters would like. Hansmann (1980) developed contract failure theory to explain why undersupplied public services tend to be provided by nonprofit organizations rather than for-profit organizations. According to Hansmann, due to the problems of asymmetrical information between contributors and service providers, people trust and contribute to nonprofit organizations over for-profit organizations because the former do not distribute profits to their managers and members. However, NGOs are not exempted from failure. According to Salamon (1995), philanthropic insufficiency, philanthropic particularism, philanthropic paternalism, and philanthropic amateurism are the “voluntary failures” NGOs face. Therefore, both government and NGOs see the partnership as insulation against the three types of failure (Steinberg, 2006). In the same line of thought, Gidron, Kramer, and Salamon (1992) argue that the competition paradigm between the welfare state and the third sector, as suggested by liberals and leftists, is ill-founded, and cooperative relations between them turn out to have a long history. Salamon advocates the simultaneous growth of nonprofit organizations with the welfare state and calls it the “third-party government” to characterize their collaborative relations in delivering social services.

Types of GO-NGO relations

Preferring the term “third sector” to NGOs, Gidron et al. (1992, pp. 16–20) proposed government and third sector relation models according to the two criteria of finance and service provision, as depicted in Table 1. Government plays the dominant role in both financing and delivering services in the government-dominant model, whereas voluntary organizations play the dominant role in the third sector dominant model. In between these two poles, two other models exist. In the dual model, government and the third sector share the burdens of finance and service provision. The third sector can either supplement the social services not supplied by the government or complement them by filling unmet needs. In the collaborative model, the government provides the financing and third sector organizations deliver the services.

The above modeling is mainly for service-delivery NGOs and excludes advocacy NGOs that have adversarial relations with government. Addressing both advocacy and service-delivery NGOs, Young (2006) categorized the three types of GO-NGO relations as supplementary, complementary, and adversarial as shown in Figure 1. In terms of service delivery, NGOs supplement the government to meet public service needs unfulfilled by the government, or complement it by delivering public goods with subsidies provided by the government. As shown in the following figure, in the supplementary view NGOs mobilize private funding to provide the services apart from government expenditure, whereas in the complementary
view government subsidies help cover NGOs’ activities. In the arena of policy advocacy, the government and NGOs try to push and change one another in an adversarial or more competitive position. Young’s model is useful in that it can analyze the complex relationship between the Korean government and NGOs in service and policy areas of the development field.

Smith and Grønbjerg (2006) mainly focus on the roles of government and NGOs in the public service system and policy process as shown in Table 2. Focusing on development cooperation, government and NGOs complement one another to respond to deficiencies in resources, capacities, and experience in ODA projects and voluntary services. In the area of policy agenda, NGOs play a role in setting or changing government policy direction. This model is quite relevant to the Korean GO-NGO relations in development cooperation. We will use this model when later discussing the Korean case in implementing overseas volunteering and development projects and in covering development education and development policy.

Synthesizing from the previous models, we developed the analytical model of GO-NGO relations illustrated in Figure 2. Chosen from Young’s (2006) work, supplementary, complementary, and adversarial relations are examined in the context of the two categories of service delivery and policy process that were suggested by Smith and Grønbjerg (2006). Then, we selected the fields of activity belonging to the categories in consideration of the Korea International Cooperation Agency’s (KOICA) service types and NGOs’ policy advocacy activities. Under the two categories of service delivery and policy advocacy, overseas volunteering was placed as the typical case of service delivery, while development policy was classified as an important advocacy area. In between these two categories, development project was classified as closer to service delivery. On the other hand, development education was placed closer to policy advocacy, considering NGOs’ tendency to raise civil awareness and advocate social norms.
South Korean GO-NGO relationships in international development cooperation

Primarily being active in domestic affairs, Korean NGOs only recently began to engage in development cooperation. Development NGO shave provided social services with their programs while participating in government-funded aid programs. Soon after this initial engagement, some existing influential NGOs began to join in, either by advocating alternative development policies or monitoring public aid programs. Sometimes government and NGOs appeared to play a tug-of-war while acknowledging the significance of each other's roles.

Weak GO-NGO financial nexus

As discussed earlier in this article, government finances nongovernmental services for more effective performance. The funding provided by government aid agencies to NGOs needs to be analyzed to shed some light on the nature of the GO-NGO relationship. We focused on the KOICA, which plays a leading role in partnering with NGOs. Supervised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the KOICA implements grants-based ODA and has expanded its partnership since the mid 2000s, after the initial introduction of programs partnering with NGOs in 1995. While the percentage of partnership programs in the total ODA budget still remains small, ranging from 1.34% in 1995 to 2.32% in 2014, the KOICA's funding for NGOs participating in its programs has increased dramatically, as shown in Figure 3.

While the KOICA funding of NGOs is clear, it is difficult to assess how significant government funding is for each NGOs largely because most NGOs do not provide systematic and comprehensive budget data for analysis. In addition, identifying representative NGOs active in development cooperation is challenging.

Table 2. GO-NGO roles in international development cooperation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service System Feature</th>
<th>Service System Description</th>
<th>Policy Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To complement deficient resources, capacities, and experience</td>
<td>Overseas volunteering</td>
<td>To lead government policy direction and respond to global actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas volunteering</td>
<td>Development project</td>
<td>Development education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development project</td>
<td>Development education</td>
<td>Development policy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Figure 2. Framework of analysis.

South Korean GO-NGO relationships in international development cooperation

Weak GO-NGO financial nexus

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With these limits in mind, we choose 13 representative NGOs based on three criteria. First, we reviewed the KOICA’s civil society organization (CSO) partnership programs from 2004 to 2014 and sorted out 10 NGOs that had implemented the most development projects through the KOICA partnership program. Second, we chose Citizens’ Coalition for Economic Justice (CCEJ) and People’s Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD), the two most prominent advocacy NGOs in Korea that have addressed alternative policies toward public issues in multiple fields. Although they are not specialized NGOs in development cooperation, both the CCEJ and PSPD have expanded their activities into the development field and their advocacy roles are strong in development assistance. ODA Watch is another major advocacy NGO that focuses on monitoring the Korean government’s ODA policy. Last, we paid attention to two major umbrella networks: the Korea NGO Council for Overseas Development Cooperation (KCOC) and the Korea Civil Society Forum on International Development Cooperation (KoFID). Many development NGOs in Korea tend to advocate their policy preferences using these collective networks rather than expressing their policy position individually. The KCOC came to represent development NGOs and has facilitated cooperation with aid agencies for ODA service provision. The KoFID has been actively engaged in policy advocacy. Table 3 shows major activities of Korean NGOs belonging to the KCOC or the KoFID.

NGOs have available to them a wide variety of financial resources, such as membership dues, government subsidies, gift donations, sales of goods and services, etc. Since each NGO has different categories for its revenue sources, it is difficult to accurately classify and analyze their funding details in a consistent manner. We simplified the funding categories into contributions, government subsidies, project incomes, and etc. Contributions consist of membership dues; donations from individuals, corporations, and foundations; one-to-one sponsorship; resource donation; and online fundraising. Government subsidy includes both ODA and other government funding for NGOs’ activities at home and in North Korea. ODA is composed of the KOICA’s direct fund to NGOs and the indirect funding for individual NGOs through the KCOC. Project incomes refer to the revenues that NGOs gain from their own programs and sales of goods. Project incomes supported by corporations or foundations were also included. Last, remaining revenues encompass reserve funds for projects, earned interest, earnings from building leases, and so on. It should be mentioned that these figures were estimated by analyzing the funds of the KOICA’s CSO partnership program and funds provided by KCOC to each NGO in 2014.

Table 4 shows the revenue composition of major development NGOs in 2014. These figures show that most development NGOs in South Korea are financially reliant on
contributions rather than government subsidies. The budgets of large development NGOs such as Good Neighbors and World Vision include only a small percentage of government subsidy, not to mention ODA. Only Global Care and Join Together Society of Korea take as much as 31% and a quarter of their revenue from ODA, respectively. Global Care, which was expanded through its participation in government programs, is more reliant on ODA than other development NGOs. Korea Food for the Hungry International is taking non-ODA government subsidies since its activities are focused on domestic welfare and North Korea. On the other hand, prominent advocacy NGOs such as the CCEJ and the PSPD do not receive government handouts at all so as to keep their independence. Given that the average revenue of NGOs in South Korea is mostly composed of fees (71%) and the proportions made up by government subsidy (24%) and philanthropy (4%) are much smaller (Park, Jung, Sokolowski, & Salamon, 2004), we can argue that majority of the development NGOs are quite independent of government funding and their partnership with government is not driven by financial consideration but by other reasons.

### From delivering services to advocating policies

Being increasingly required to improve development aid effectiveness, the Korean government has put sustained effort into cooperating with NGOs at home. Development NGOs sometimes simply delivered the services on behalf of the aid agency or found alternative ways to meet the diverse needs of recipient countries. While the government and NGOs have worked together to better implement overseas volunteering, development projects, and development education, it does not mean that their relations are always smooth. NGOs engage with more diverse policy actors beyond government aid agencies. While interacting with government bureaucracy and international bodies, they raise independent and sometimes differing voices to guide or press official decision makers in the direction they think desirable. Their advocacy role has been prominent in development policy.
Table 4. Revenue composition of major development NGOs in 2014.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NGO</th>
<th>Total Income* (USD)</th>
<th>Contributions</th>
<th>Government Subsidies</th>
<th>Project Incomes</th>
<th>Etc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good Neighbors</td>
<td>99 million</td>
<td>90.55%</td>
<td>6.45%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Vision</td>
<td>197 million</td>
<td>60.94%</td>
<td>0.81%</td>
<td>6.83%</td>
<td>7.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Save the Children Korea</td>
<td>57 million</td>
<td>66.22%</td>
<td>2.06%</td>
<td>13.31%</td>
<td>15.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Civic Sharing</td>
<td>2.4 million</td>
<td>84.61%</td>
<td>2.59%</td>
<td>3.94%</td>
<td>6.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea Food for the Hungry Interna-</td>
<td>107 million</td>
<td>56.73%</td>
<td>0.26%</td>
<td>32.40%</td>
<td>32.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tional</td>
<td>1.6 million</td>
<td>53.68%</td>
<td>31.32%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan Korea</td>
<td>12.3 million</td>
<td>89.55%</td>
<td>1.88%</td>
<td>4.71%</td>
<td>6.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Join Together Society Korea**</td>
<td>4.4 million</td>
<td>60.3%</td>
<td>25.90%</td>
<td>4.14%</td>
<td>30.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Body One Spirit Movement</td>
<td>5.4 million</td>
<td>73.09%</td>
<td>6.15%</td>
<td>12.68%</td>
<td>18.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good People</td>
<td>19 million</td>
<td>61.55%</td>
<td>0.36%</td>
<td>0.47%</td>
<td>0.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODA Watch</td>
<td>0.13 million</td>
<td>54.83%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>17.24%</td>
<td>17.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizens’ Coalition for Economic</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People’s Solidarity for Participa-</td>
<td>1.9 million</td>
<td>92.10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tory Democracy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*1 USD = 1194.16 KRW; **JTS Korea calculated its 2014 income as contribution (86.20%), subsidy (4.1%), etc. (9.7%), according to its website. Given that the KCOC provided funding of USD 1,139,431 (25.90%) in 2014 to JTS Korea, however, this amount was supposedly included in contributions. Thus, we classified the amount provided by the KCOC to JTS Korea in 2014 as ODA (government subsidy).

Source: gathered from each NGO’s website and stat.koica.go.kr and by e-mail.
**Overseas volunteering**

The KOICA first dispatched 44 volunteers in 1990, and by 2014 the number of volunteers had increased to 4389. In the meantime, the government kept trying to reform the management system to overcome the challenges related to coordinator shortages and matching needs of volunteers and local organizations. Upon this changing momentum, the KOICA has begun to coordinate its KOICA-NGO volunteering program through the KCOC to support activities of NGOs. The KCOC has received funds from the KOICA and dispatched NGO volunteers since 2004. One Body One Spirit Movement and Global Care, for instance, have assigned KOICA-NGO volunteers to help with development tasks. In addition, the KOICA, together with the KCOC, promoted the idea of sharing experiences and information on volunteering activities and management among NGOs by holding the first World Friends Korea Forum in 2016. Meanwhile, NGOs have also executed overseas volunteering programs initiated with different objectives. Good Neighbors has run Good Neighbors Volunteers (GNVol) to provide various services required in the project field. Korea Food for the Hungry International has also operated the Hunger Corps, mainly to carry out missionary work. Good People dispatched volunteers to support its one-to-one child sponsorship program. Given these points, it can be seen that the NGOs dispatched volunteers to meet their own needs rather than to supplement needs unmet by the government.

**Development projects**

The KOICA has implemented its development projects by contracting out under the project management consulting system. Using this scheme, it could lighten the workload by tapping into the work experience and human resources of NGOs. The scope of services has been departmentalized, and thus project participation by the nongovernmental sector could be increased (KOICA, 2010). The KOICA, meanwhile, has supported NGOs’ development projects through the CSO partnership program. Partnering with the government agency, NGOs often coordinated with local stakeholders and recipients using their better access to the grassroots. The number of partnership programs was 28 in 2002 and had increased to 82 by 2014. This number illustrates the importance the agency places on cooperation with NGOs at home. Looking at the projects of NGOs selected for the study, we can see they are largely contributing their functional and sectoral expertise to the KOICA’s CSO partnership programs, as shown in Table 5. Good Neighbors has often taken part in community development. Save the Children Korea has implemented mother and child-related projects, and Global Care has supported many health projects. Meanwhile, some NGOs are operating projects to meet more specific demands. One Body One Spirit Movement has undertaken projects for the rights of the vulnerable and disabled, and Global Civic Sharing has worked to improve migrants’ living environment.

Once projects are implemented, the KOICA evaluates NGOs’ activities, examining their financial management and development impacts, which influences the KOICA’s selection of NGOs for further partnership. By doing so, it seeks to improve the NGOs’ accountability in implementing and managing the partnership projects. On the other hand, NGOs also independently monitor government projects. ODA Watch, for example, visited Cambodia in 2015 with citizens including CSO activists and development experts to monitor the completed ODA projects. They investigated the KOICA’s projects and advocated sustainable operation to reflect the voices of local residents.
Apart from the KOICA’s programs, development NGOs have implemented development projects. They largely have been active in encouraging participation of local communities and covering socially neglected groups such as disabled people, ethnic minorities, etc. They have also utilized expertise and introduced innovative means to meet various local needs. Good Neighbors, for instance, has established social enterprises such as Good Sharing in Mongolia and Good Solar Innovation in Cambodia and created green products using appropriate technology. Good Sharing developed “G-saver” to help reduce heat waste and air pollution. Global Civic Sharing also supports social enterprise and start-up businesses to increase income. Their services were local-oriented and thus customized for the specific local groups, which supplements the government’s rather comprehensive services.

**Development education**

The KOICA has provided systemized educational courses in the ODA Education Center. It offers education to help understand development cooperation, cultivate global citizenship, and foster development professionals. NGOs have also offered development education. For example, Save the Children Korea, Global Civic Sharing, Korea Food for the Hungry International, One Body One Spirit Movement, and World Vision are providing various educational programs. Closer to the grassroots, they arouse the interest of people in development issues and elicit support for foreign aid through development education, including campaigns and workshops. The KOICA has also cooperated with NGOs by running Next-Generation ODA Leader Education. They have worked together to raise awareness of development issues and jointly developed teaching materials. The KOICA also funds the KCOC to train instructors and NGO staff for delivering profound development education.

**Table 5. 2014 partnership programs of KOICA and selected NGOs.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NGOs</th>
<th>Projects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good Neighbors</td>
<td>Malnutrition prevention for children under five in Rwanda (’12-’14) Community development &amp; income generation by herbal industry in Nepal (’12-’14) Community development &amp; income generation by cook stove in Guatemala (’14-’16) Income generation through production increase of crops in Malawi (’14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Vision</td>
<td>Reconstruction of Mayo area in Northern Sudan (’12-’14) Eco-friendly agriculture and food security in Sri Lanka (’13-’15) Agriculture and water sanitation in Uganda (’14-’16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Save the Children Korea</td>
<td>Maternal &amp; newborn health improvement in Bangladesh (’12-’14) Infant development in Baglung and Rolpa, Nepal (’14-’16) Improvement of basic health services in Laos (’14-’16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Civic Sharing</td>
<td>Income generation &amp; education for migrants in Myanmar (’13-’15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea Food for the Hungry International</td>
<td>Vocational training in Montalban, Philippines (’14-’16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Care</td>
<td>Basic health system development in Bangladesh (’11, ’13-’15) Health through water, sanitation, and mobile clinics in Cambodia (’12, ’13-’14) Capacity building for tuberculosis management using m-Health in Morocco (’14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan Korea</td>
<td>Agricultural training and nutrition education in Mozambique (’13-’15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Body One Spirit Movement</td>
<td>Leadership capacity building for the vulnerable and youth in Mongolia (’12-’14) Support for physically challenged people with empowerment in Cambodia (’14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good People</td>
<td>Building sanitation facilities and improving awareness in Vietnam (’14-’16)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: KOICA website.
Development policy
It has only been recently that Korean NGOs have proposed and led policy agenda in development cooperation. They nevertheless have been active in introducing and disseminating the international development norms in Korean society. NGOs put united efforts into speaking up in one voice for the post 2015 development agenda. They, for instance, participated in carrying a global campaign called “action/2015” to help the public engage in setting the development agenda. This campaign was conducted to call on the Korean government to make a more accountable development agenda, and to ask citizens to commit to small actions for sustainable development. In addition, Korean development NGO networks were seeking coalitional strategies to enhance their civil society representation and capacity. Three leading development NGO networks, the Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP) Korea, the KCOC, and the KoFID, formed a network of networks called “Beyond 2015 Korea” in 2012. Beyond 2015 Korea has influenced the government in preparing how to respond to the new international development agreement through several workshops and meetings. The Korean government was initially instrumental in providing international venues such as the Fourth High-level Forum on Development Effectiveness to Korean development NGOs. Seizing the momentum of highlighted domestic attention to development cooperation, NGOs successfully pursued the coalitional strategy to raise independent but cooperative voices in ODA policy making. The Civil G20 Dialogue and Busan Global Civil Society Forum are good examples that the government taking advice from NGOs could play a leading role in forming development policy (Lee et al., 2012, p. 150).

Prominent advocacy NGOs also began to participate in the ODA policy process. The CCEJ and the PSPD had formed a special international committee to carry out advocacy activities, including ODA policy monitoring, post 2015 agenda setup, support for human rights and democracy, etc. The International Solidarity Committee of PSPD has monitored the ODA policy stance and scale, operating system, and project contents and then proposed alternative policies by releasing reports and proposing legislative issues to make the Korean government responsibly participate in solving global poverty. It has also provided civil lectures and policy workshops to share the development issues with citizens. In a similar flow, the International Committee of CCEJ has handled government ODA policy issues as part of its mission to address the problem of social justice in developing countries. The CCEJ organized an advocacy organization, named ODA Watch, in 2006. ODA Watch, which became independent in 2009, specifically deals with policy advocacy. It has primarily been monitoring and proposing Korean ODA policy and conducting research and evaluation. In addition, Korean development NGOs are increasingly taking part in policy advocacy. World Vision, Save the Children, and Good Neighbors have promoted efficiency and transparency through educational campaigns. Nevertheless, many Korean development NGOs have been rather coy about raising their voice on ODA policy so far.

Complex GO-NGO relationship
From the above discussed Korean GO-NGO relations in development cooperation, we can draw the model illustrated in Figure 4. While government plays a pivotal role, the nature of the relationship can differ significantly depending on the specific activities provided by NGOs. When government unilaterally leads a development project, the capabilities exerted by NGOs can be limited. NGOs, on the other hand, can take the leadership in implementing
aid projects utilizing their technical expertise and capacity. This push and pull relationship can take on a supplementary, complementary, or adversarial character.

Based on the analytical framework illustrated in Figure 2, which logically generated twelve cells when three GO-NGO relational types were crossed by the four partnership areas, we placed different activities and roles played by Korean development NGOs. Figure 4 shows how each GO-NGO’s relational type conspicuously differs from the others across four partnership program areas.

In the overseas volunteering area, the relationship between the Korean government and NGOs is characterized as being complementary. NGOs’ overseas volunteering programs were largely funded by government and dispatched KOICA-NGO volunteers. Since the Korean government has operated KOICA-NGO volunteer programs, NGOs have provided diverse training and managed the voluntary services. While government has supported NGOs in dispatching volunteers to developing countries and supervising them, the NGOs shared the information and experiences through workshops or forums.

GO-NGO relations in development projects represent all three types of relations. In managing development projects, NGOs received a government subsidy and implemented development projects in complementary relations. NGOs operated either government ODA projects or initiated their own development projects in partnership with a government agency through institutional channels created by the government. When NGOs participated in government projects, their roles had some limitations in developing and operating the projects with their own initiative. In the partnership, on the other hand, they were more likely to design and implement aid projects on their own authority and responsibility, although they followed the government-created institutional framework. The government and NGOs made up for each other’s limited resources and talents in managing development
projects with these complementary natures. Meanwhile, NGOs separately implemented development projects to supplement the services not covered by the government with their own revenues. Some, such as Good Neighbors and Global Civic Sharing, also introduced innovative means and supported socially marginalized groups according to local demand. In this process, NGOs could play a dynamic role in utilizing expertise such as an appropriate technology. On the other hand, the government and NGOs also took an adversarial position toward each other. The government monitored and evaluated NGOs’ participation in the projects that the government contracted out or supported. NGOs with an advocacy-oriented nature also did the same for the ODA projects independently.

In development education, the relations between the Korean government and NGOs had both complementary and supplementary natures. NGOs built supplementary relations with the government by providing various educational programs and campaigns to raise civic awareness and cultivate an attitude of global citizenship. Korean NGOs have long been influential in citizen education. With an advantage in development education, NGOs drove citizens to take action against global challenges. In recognition of their active contributions, the government constructed capacity-building programs for NGOs to increase the professional competence of their staff and reinforce the institutional system. In a complementary view, the government facilitated educational activities through government-funded training programs.

In the policy advocacy area, development policy has three dimensions. Korean government and development NGOs supplement one another in fulfilling development goals and complying with international norms and practices in major international venues. They also respectively work to prioritize development goals and agenda among other competing domestic policy goals to seek public support for foreign aid. At the same time, government and NGOs formed complementary relations. Government provided NGOs with important information and decisions of international organizations, while NGOs proposed alternative policy opinions and ideas on already articulated official agenda to make them more comprehensive and effective. NGOs, on the other hand, watched over government ODA policies and called for government action to respond to unmet local needs or further develop ties with local CSOs. They criticized the government when its ODA policy appeared to be determined by national interests. This critical role of NGOs led their relationship with the government to be adversarial. They also took conflicting lines when their priorities diverged. The government tended to shy away from politically sensitive issues, while NGOs promoted universal values and help for minorities by presenting their voices and holding forums and workshops.

These features made the relationship between the Korean government and NGOs complex due to their intertwined linkages. The above Korean GO-NGOs model in development cooperation shows that their relations have more complementary features than supplementary or adversarial in the service and policy areas. It does not, however, necessarily mean that their relations are always more complementary than supplementary or adversarial. From development project to development policy, the complementary feature is the most frequent pattern in the model. Nevertheless, the other coexisting features appear at the same time. The Korean government and NGOs, for instance, execute their duties to supplement each other in development projects, development education, and development policy. Whereas, they concurrently show an adversarial tendency in the realm of development projects and development policy. In particular, each NGO largely plays the role of fulfilling
the mission and forming relations with government at the working level. When advocating and raising an objection, however, they as individuals and as a collective take an adversarial position and raise their voices. Although the model is seemingly contradictory, in practice the relationships were relatively stable. Given all these things together, it can be seen that a complex relationship has been established between the Korean government and NGOs in development cooperation.

### Conclusion

This research aimed to analyze the relations between the Korean government and development NGOs from concept to practical application. The modified model of GO-NGO relations was applied to effectively analyze the interactive and vibrant relations between the Korean government and NGOs in international development cooperation, where various development issues and multi-stakeholder is more intertwined. The Korean government and development NGOs have formed a relationship through the course of a historical series of events such as the Korean War, democratization, joining the OECD. Responding to various demands, a majority of the development NGOs have primarily carried out service delivery activities while engaging less in advocating specific policies. However, the number of NGOs that stand up for policy advocacy on important development issues has steadily increased as South Korea, a former aid recipient, has expanded its role as a donor. Thus, different types of relationship have formed between the government and NGOs. While it is critical to recognize such relationships in the Korean case, rarely has this type of study been conducted when dealing with nongovernmental entities in the development field.

We suggested anew complex model of relations between the Korean government and NGOs integrating three types of relations (supplementary, complementary, and adversarial) from service delivery to policy advocacy in development cooperation. Major findings from the Korean case are that the government and NGOs tend most frequently to have complementary features. They showed complementary relations with one another in all fields: overseas volunteering, development project, development education, and development policy. However, they have formed a complex relationship presenting seemingly contradictory but inherently different features of relations depending on the area of activity. The relationship between the Korean government and NGOs concurrently had an adversarial and supplementary character alongside the complementary aspect in the arenas of development project and policy.

Our study has important policy implications for both the Korean government and NGOs. It indicates the importance of not having only one type of relationship in the areas of policy advocacy and service delivery. As they interacted with one another, government and NGOs formed and developed a complementary, supplementary, or adversarial relationship. By doing so, they are building constructive relationships, which work as a driver for mutual development. The Korean government has cooperated with NGOs in delivering aid services and policy effectiveness, while maintaining a certain distance from NGOs, or sometimes monitoring whether they are adhering to the rules and stated purpose in implementing government-subsidized projects. NGOs have also sought to make an impact independently or together with the government when providing services. They have demanded that the government be more responsive to local demands and comply with global norms in ODA policies. Due to this complex relationship, paying attention to the overall outcome of
GO-NGO cooperation in development assistance could be constructive for an emerging donor Korea to learn better practices quickly.

Theoretically, our study is expected to contribute to the existing literature dealing with government and NGO relations in the policy process. We argue that the Korean case of cooperation between government and NGOs in development assistance suggests a new symbiotic interaction pattern where both public and nongovernmental organizations and their programs can grow together in a relatively new policy area like development assistance. Late entry to global governance may compel both government and NGOs to comply with existing norms and practices, which seems to facilitate their cooperation.

The limitations of this study, however, are that other internal or external factors that may influence the relations between the government and NGOs were not considered. Thus, future studies should observe potential determinants in GO-NGO relations. It would be valuable to analyze whether the size and capacities of NGOs or the political and international environment influence GO-NGO relations in development cooperation.

Notes

1. In the history of South Korea’s democratization, 1987 is considered as the year of “democratic transition” from authoritarian rule to democracy. Upon the massive demonstrations demanding return to a popular presidential election system, the Chun Doo-hwan government gave in, and a democratically elected president swore in his government the next year.
2. Good Neighbors(44), World Vision(36), Save the Children Korea(33), Global Civic Sharing(28), Korea Food for the Hungry International(22), Global Care(21), Plan Korea(21), Join Together Society Korea(19), One Body One Spirit(17), and Good People(17) (stat.koica.go.kr).

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