

The Giving Mind:

Analysis of South Korean Public and Elite Attitudes on ODA

J. James Kim, Choi Hyeonjung, John J. Lee, Kang Chungku January 2017



THE ASAN INSTITUTE for POLICY STUDIES BILL& MELINDA GATES foundation

Asan Report

The Giving Mind:

Analysis of South Korean Public and Elite Attitudes on ODA

J. James Kim, Choi Hyeonjung, John J. Lee, Kang Chungku January 2017

THE ASAN INSTITUTE for POLICY STUDIES

Acknowledgments

This report has been made possible by the generous grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The purpose of this grant is to support Korea's effort to sustain and increase engagement on global health and development issues. The authors would like to extend their gratitude to Ms. Yuko Watanabe and Ms. Kimberly Sutton, both Associate Program Officers at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, for working with us and for their impactful work.

* Special thanks to Mr. Choi Sunghan for infographics.

About

The Asan Institute for Policy Studies

The Asan Institute for Policy Studies is an independent, non-partisan think tank with the mandate to undertake policy-relevant research to foster domestic, regional, and international environments conducive to peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula, as well as Korean reunification.

Disclaimer

The views expressed herein are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies.

Authors

J. James Kim

J. James Kim is the director of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, DC and research fellow in the American Politics and Policy Program in the Center for Regional Studies at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies (Seoul). Dr. Kim is also a lecturer in the Executive Master of Public Administration program at Columbia University. Previously, he was an assistant professor of political science at the California State Polytechnic University (Pomona). He also served as a summer research associate at the RAND Corporation and as a statistical consultant for the Institute for Social and Economic Research and Planning at the School of International and Public Affairs in Columbia University. His primary research interests include political economy, energy, security, public opinion, democracy, methodology, and media. Dr. Kim received a B.S. and M.S. in industrial and labor relations from Cornell University and an M. Phil. and Ph.D. in political science from Columbia University.

Choi Hyeonjung

Choi Hyeonjung is the research fellow in charge of the Climate Change and Sustainable Development Program at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies. Previously, Dr. Choi was the deputy secretary to the ROK President for green growth and assistant secretary for the national agenda at the Blue House (the ROK Presidential Office). He also worked as a policy research fellow in the 17th Presidential Transition Committee. Prior to these public service positions, he was a research scholar at the Institute of Social Science, the University of Tokyo, and full-time instructor at the Korean Air Force Academy. His areas of research interest include climate change, green growth and sustainable development, new growth engines, East Asian developmental state model and industrial policy, national future strategy, and development assistance. Dr. Choi received his B.A. and M.A. from Yonsei University and his Ph.D. in political science from Purdue University. He is the recipient of the Order of National Service Merit and two Presidential Distinguished Service Awards.

John J. Lee

John J. Lee is a senior associate in the Center for Foreign Policy and National Security at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies. Mr. Lee is also a member of the Young Leaders Program at Pacific Forum CSIS. His research interests include Northeast Asian security, US foreign policy, political issues related to North Korea, and economic sanctions. Mr. Lee received his B.A. in Government from Dartmouth College and M.A. in International Studies from Yonsei University Graduate School of International Studies (GSIS).

Kang Chungku

Kang Chungku is a senior research associate in the Center for Public Opinion and Quantitative Research at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies. Prior to joining the Asan Institute, he was a research assistant at the Korea Dialogue Academy in Seoul. His research interests include quantitative research methods, survey design, and statistical data analysis. Mr. Kang received his B.A. in English and M.A. in Sociology at Korea University.

Table of Contents

Introduction	10
ODA Support and Source of Information	
Public Perception about South Korea as a Developed Nation	15
South Korean Elite Attitudes on ODA	17
ODA Awareness	17
ODA Support	19
Information	20
Most Pressing Issues for Developing Countries	22
Impact of South Korea's ODA	23
Impressions of Developing Countries	24
ODA Policy Rationale	25
Economic Development and Poverty Reduction	27
in Developing Countries	
South Korea's ODA Budget	28

Optimal ODA Budget	29
Priority Regions for South Korea's ODA	29
Role of NGOs and South Korean Government	30
Priority Policy Agenda for South Korea's ODA	31
Most Successful International Institution or Nation	33
in Providing ODA	
Most Successful Domestic Institution in Providing ODA	34
Affinity Towards Philanthropic Experience	35
General Knowledge and Outlook on Developmental	37
Issues and Institutions	
Evaluation of Foreign Policies and ODA Policies of Past South	38
Korean Administrations	
Future ODA Policy	39
Conclusion	
Survey Methodology	41

List of Figures

Figure 1:	South Korea's ODA Volume (2000-2015)	11
Figure 2:	Public Awareness about ODA	11
Figure 3:	Increase or Decrease Overseas Aid?	12
Figure 4:	Impact of Government PR on ODA Support	13
Figure 5:	Support-Opposition to ODA, by PR Medium	14
Figure 6:	South Korea as an Advanced Economy?	16
Figure 7:	Public Support for ODA and Efficiency	17
Figure 8:	Awareness about ODA and Impact on South Korea	18
Figure 9:	ODA's Impact on South Korea, by Ideology	18
Figure 10:	ODA Support	19
Figure 11:	Reasons for Supporting ODA	19
Figure 12:	Reasons for Supporting ODA, by Ideology	20
Figure 13:	Channels of Promoting ODA Policy	21
Figure 14:	Channels of Promoting ODA Policy, by Ideology	21
Figure 15:	Most Pressing Issues for Developing Countries	22
Figure 16:	Problems that Need Urgent Solutions, by Ideology	22
Figure 17:	Problems that Need Urgent Solutions, by Gender	23
Figure 18:	Benefits of Korean ODA	24
Figure 19:	Impressions of Developing Countries	25
Figure 20:	Why Provide ODA?	26

Figure 21:	Why Provide ODA? (by Ideology)	27
Figure 22:	Is ODA Helpful?	27
Figure 23:	Is ODA Helpful? (by Ideology)	28
Figure 24:	South Korea's ODA Budget	28
Figure 25:	Optimal ODA Budget	29
Figure 26:	Priority Region	30
Figure 27:	Role of NGOs and South Korean Government	31
Figure 28:	Priority Policy Agenda for South Korea's ODA	32
Figure 29:	Priority Policy Agenda for South Korea's ODA,	33
	by Ideology	
Figure 30:	Most Successful International Institution or Nation	34
	as ODA Provider	
Figure 31:	Most Successful Domestic Institution in Providing ODA	34
Figure 32:	Experience of Donation or Volunteering	35
Figure 33:	Type of Donation or Volunteering	36
Figure 34:	Biggest Sponsor of Donation or Volunteering	36
Figure 35:	General Knowledge about ODA-related Institutions	37
Figure 36:	General Knowledge about UN SDG	38
Figure 37:	Evaluations of Past Foreign Policies and ODA Policies	38
Figure 38:	Future ODA Policy	39

Introduction

2016 is an important milestone for South Korea as it marks the 20th anniversary of the country's membership into the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Prosperity was not always a given for this once war-torn nation, however. In the immediate aftermath of the Korean War (1950-53), its per capita GDP was at a meager \$67 as of 1953 with average life expectancy of 52 years in 1960 and literacy rate at about 30%.¹ Today, South Korea ranks as the world's 11th largest economy with per capita GDP of about \$25,000. Average life expectancy is 81 years and primary school net enrollment rate is 99%. The country's rapid ascendance from an ODA recipient to donor status was marked by its induction into the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD in 2009. South Korea currently contributes about 0.14% of gross national income (GNI) towards official development assistance (ODA) and this figure has continued to increase over the past decade.² With South Korea's influence and participation in ODA likely to grow in the foreseeable future, how do its public and policymaking community envision its role?

Although there have been many studies that have explored South Korean public attitudes towards ODA³, this report presents the first *elite* survey on South Korean ODA. While South Korean elites, much like the public, favor continuation of the

- Irma Adelman. 1997. "Social Development in Korea, 1953-93," In The Korean Economy 1945-95: Performance and Vision for the 21st Century. Sa Dong-se, KS Kim, and DH Perkins (eds.) Korea Development Institute; SM Yang, YH Kang, S Harper, GD Smith, DA Leon, and J Lynch. 2010. "Understanding the Rapid Increase in Life Expectancy in South Korea," American Journal of Public Health, 100(5): 896-903.
- 2. OECD (http://stats.oecd.org).
- 3. Brendan Howe. 2015. "Development Effectiveness: Charting South Korea's Role and Contributions" in Scott A. Snyder's Middle-Power Korea (ed.) Council of Foreign Relations. OECD. 2016. Development Co-operation Report: The Sustainable Development Goals as Business Opportunities; Kwak Sungil. 2015. "South Korea's Development Assistance and Economic Outreach Toward Southeast Asia," in Gilbert Rozman's Facing Reality in East Asia: Tough Decisions on Competition and Cooperation. Joint US-Korea Academic Studies, KEI; Axel Marx and Jadir Soares. 2013. "South Korea's Transition from Recipient to DAC Donor: Assessing Korea's Development Cooperation Policy," International Development Policy. 4.2: 107-42.





government's ODA policy, our data reveals some non-trivial findings about potential improvements in existing public relations campaign and interesting ideological and gender differences among elites on various dimensions of existing policy. For instance, progressives tend to place greater urgency on issues like health/medicine, energy, and





Are you aware that your country provides ODA to developing countries?

Source: 2014 Kyung Hee University Report on ODA Public Opinion.

economic crisis while conservatives feel more urgently about the environment and climate change. When asked why South Korea should provide ODA for developing countries, progressives answered that it is used to promote national interest. Conservatives, on the other hand, emphasized the importance of enhancing peace and stability.

While South Korea's ODA spending has certainly grown over time, general public awareness of the government's ODA policy has lagged in comparison to other developed countries, such as the ones in Europe. For instance, 61.5% of the Korean public is informed about the government's ODA policy, which is higher than that of the US but lower than that of the UK and Ireland.

Similarly, while approximately 53% of the South Korean public thinks that the government should increase overseas aid, this figure is modest compared to Europe



Figure 3. Increase or Decrease Overseas Aid? (%)

where 68% thinks the same.⁴

What explains this trend? One explanation might be a lack of adequate information about ODA. As shown in the latest public opinion poll, only 35.9% of the public stated that they have been exposed to government public relations campaign on ODA. This is a 5%p drop from 2013 and nearly 20%p drop from 2012. The trend is especially important when public support for ODA is related to public awareness of the government's ODA policy. As shown in Figure 4, public support for ODA is more than 18%p higher if the respondent has been exposed to information about the government's ODA policy. For those who have not been informed about the ODA policy, the opposition is almost 20%p higher.

Figure 4. Impact of Government PR on ODA Support (%)



Source: 2014 Kyung Hee University ODA Public Opinion Poll.

4. We also see a declining support for ODA in South Korea over time with support for ODA at 89% in 2011 and 86.5% in 2014.

ODA Support and Source of Information

Data suggests that public support for the government's ODA policy may also be a function of the medium for information dissemination. When asked to name the

Figure 5. Support-Opposition to ODA by PR Medium



Source: 2014 Kyung Hee University ODA Public Opinion Poll.

method by which the respondent was exposed to information about the Korean government's ODA policy, television (90.5%) was mentioned as the most popular medium followed by newspaper/magazine (26.7%), Internet/SNS (24.8%), radio (16.2%), friends/relatives/acquaintances (13.1%), government issued print materials (12.5%), and NGOs (9.7%). The level of support for ODA differed according to the method by which individuals were exposed to information on ODA. While support for ODA was higher among those individuals who were exposed to information from television (+1.8%p), Internet/SNS (+10.8%p), friends/relatives/acquaintances (+6.2%p), government-issued print materials (+5.6%p), and NGOs (+6.5%p), opposition to ODA was higher for those individuals who were exposed to information related to ODA in newspapers/magazines (-3.1%p) and radio (-6.5%p). Of these, Internet/SNS had the greatest impact on ODA support with nearly two-thirds more individuals supporting rather than opposing the South Korean government's ODA policy. It is also worth noting that younger and more educated individuals tend to favor Internet/SNS in comparison to others. The observed demographic tilt is meaningful given the extent of smartphone usage and Internet penetration in South Korea. In terms of policy, this finding suggests that the government public relations campaign should be targeted to expand the usage of Internet/SNS for older and less educated individuals.

Public Perception about South Korea as a Developed Nation

Public perception about South Korea's place in the world and its role could also be important in shaping people's opinion about ODA. Take for instance, the public's perception about South Korea's developmental status. Approximately 37% of the Korean public in 2014 saw South Korea as a developed nation. This is a marginal improvement from 36.3% in 2013 but a significant drop from 43.5% in 2012. What this suggests is that most South Koreans do not perceive themselves to be a part of an advanced economy.

There are noticeable differences in opinion according to age, region, and education with older individuals with lower levels of education from Seoul and Daejeon/Sejong tending to see South Korea as an advanced economy. This finding is understandable

given that these individuals are likely to have experienced or witnessed some form of dramatic change during their lifetime. For instance, older cohorts tend to have lower levels of education in South Korea and are likely to have lived through the economic change from the 1960s to today. Individuals in Daejeon and Sejong City have seen rapid broad-sweeping change and development over the last 20 years as a result of government policy and planning. Changes in other regions have been relatively incremental and uneven.

Perception about South Korea's developmental status is important given that individual support for ODA appears to be contingent on this variable. More specifically, the difference among individuals that support and oppose ODA is approximately 20% depending on their perception of South Korea's developmental status. In short, the more likely that people perceive South Korea as an advanced economy, the more likely it is for them to support ODA spending.

While South Korean public awareness and support for ODA has much left to be desired, there is robustness in attitudes about ODA over time. As shown in Figure 7, the range of public support and perceived effectiveness of ODA during 2011-2014 is approximately 3%p. Lack of noticeable shifts in these measures suggest that South Korean general public opinion on ODA is relatively stationary. Elite attitudes, however, may differ. Korean elites are more likely to be informed and may even have greater





Source: 2014 Kyung Hee University ODA Public Opinion Poll.

Figure 7. Public Support for ODA and Efficiency (%)

Do you support ODA to developing countries? Is ODA efficient?



Source: 2014 Kyung Hee University ODA Public Opinion Poll.

consequential impact on ODA policy than the general public.

Accordingly, we have conducted the first elite survey on ODA in South Korea during August 12-30, 2016. The data collection method involved tapping into various contact lists of active members in government and academia. Some individuals are directly tied to ODA policymaking but the list, for the most part, included individuals with a diverse set of experience and expertise in policy. The survey was conducted online and the sample size was 200.

South Korean Elite Attitudes on ODA

ODA Awareness

Indeed, our data suggests that awareness about ODA was significantly higher among

elites than the general public. Vast majority of respondents (96.5%), for instance, were aware that South Korea provided ODA to developing countries (3.5% were not).

94.5% of respondents agreed that development assistance that South Korea received from the international community until the mid-1990s impacted the country's economic and social development (5.5% disagreed). Ideological differences seem to matter in the respondent's answer to this question in that conservatives appear to have a greater appreciation for ODA with 52% stating that ODA contribution to South Korea's social and economic development was large. This percentage was significantly higher than that of the progressives (35.4%).





ODA Support

The elites were also more forthcoming about supporting ODA spending than the general public. When respondents were asked whether they supported South Korea's ODA to developing countries, an overwhelming 99.5% said that they did (strongly support: 57%; moderately support: 42.5%). This is significantly higher than the 86.5% support among the general Korean public. Only 0.5% of respondents moderately opposed.





Figure 11. Reasons for Supporting ODA (%)



38.7% of respondents supported South Korea's ODA because it contributed to peace and stability of the international society. Another 26.6% stated that it improved South Korea's international image and, therefore, enhanced South Korea's diplomacy. About a quarter of respondents (25.1%) supported South Korea's ODA because it helped eliminate poverty in developing countries. Only 7.5% stated that South Korea, as a former-recipient, had the responsibility to give back.

These differences appear to be influenced by ideological tendencies as progressives tending to think more broadly about the global community and public good as opposed to conservatives who tend to think more strategically. For instance, plurality of progressives (46.8%) supported ODA because it contributed to international peace and stability. For the plurality of conservatives (38.7%), the more important reason was the impact that ODA would have on South Korea's international image and soft power.



Figure 12. Reasons for Supporting ODA, by Ideology (%)

Information

When asked which channel should be utilized more to raise awareness and promote government's ODA policy, almost half of the respondents (48%) identified broadcast media as the single most important outlet. Some also identified the Internet (25%) and print media (18%) as useful outlets. Publications and promotional materials (7.5%) and billboard advertisements (0.5%) constituted a small percentage. While we see little difference along ideological lines for broadcast media, progressives (34.2%) seem to hold higher preference for Internet/SNS than conservatives (22.7%) while the conservatives



Figure 13. Channels of Promoting ODA Policy (%)

Figure 14. Channels of Promoting ODA Policy, by Ideology (%)



(21.3%) hold greater interest in print media than progressives (8.9%).

This finding contradicts the result discussed earlier, which shows that the leveraged impact of television and radio are much weaker when compared to other channels, such as the Internet/SNS, personal acquaintances, NGO, and even the government itself. This was especially true when we looked at the relationship between information dissemination and support for ODA. In particular, the previous analysis showed that individuals who obtained information through the Internet/SNS were two-thirds

more likely to support (than oppose) existing ODA policy.

Most Pressing Issues for Developing Countries

When asked about the problems that developing countries face today, 34% of respondents identified infrastructure as the most pressing issue. 21.5% also named food/water shortages as an urgent issue followed by health/medical care (13%),



Figure 15. Most Pressing Issues for Developing Countries (%)

Figure 16. Problems that Need Urgent Solutions, by Ideology (%)



education (13%), economic crisis (10%), energy shortage (3%), and natural disaster and climate change (2.5%).

Ideological differences appear to matter in some of these areas. For instance, the data shows that progressives place greater urgency on issues like health/medicine (80%), energy (80%), and economic crisis (60%) while conservatives feel more urgently about environment and climate change (45.5%). Overall, there appears to be relative consensus on issues like education, food shortage, and infrastructure.

Gender was also an important determinant with women generally expressing greater sensitivity for urgency of dealing with issues like health/medicine (94.1%), education (78.6%), energy shortage (50%), infrastructure (68.4%), and climate change (57.1%).

Figure 17. Problems that Need Urgent Solutions, by Gender (%)



Impact of South Korea's ODA

Respondents were asked to identify specific benefits that South Korean ODA offered. Eliminating poverty (20.9%) was the most common answer. The next three areas related to South Korea's relationships with other nations. Improving South Korea's diplomatic relations (18.9%), strengthening South Korea's economic ties (18.9%), and improving South Korea's status in the world (18.2%) all received significant votes. Emergency relief and disaster recovery (16.9%) and eliminating diseases (6.1%) were seen by respondents as areas that benefit the least from South Korean ODA.

Figure 18. Benefits of Korean ODA (%)



Impressions of Developing Countries

Respondents were asked about their impressions of developing countries. Specifically, they were asked to state the first thing that comes to mind when they hear the term *developing country*. Poverty (30%) was the most common answer followed by economic development (28%), underdeveloped (13.5%), aid and assistance (10.5%), and development potential (8.5%). Respondents also associated the term with specific regions including Africa (4.5%) and Southeast Asia (2.5%). Overall, 45% of respondents had negative impressions of developing countries, associating the term with characteristics such as poverty, underdeveloped, and disease and food shortages. On the other hand, 36.5% associated the term with positive characteristics such as economic development and development potential.



Figure 19. Impressions of Developing Countries (%)

ODA Policy Rationale

Respondents were asked why developed countries should provide aid to developing countries. 29.5% said that providing aid served the country's national interests such as increasing trade while 20% reasoned that it contributed to international peace and stability. Other reasons include strengthening diplomatic relationships with developing countries (15.5%), contributing to the development of the recipient countries' economy/ society (15.5%), and serving moral obligations as members of the international community (14%).

When respondents were asked why South Korea should provide aid to developing countries, their answers diverged. A third of the respondents (32%) pointed to strengthening diplomatic relations with developing countries as the main reason. Serving national interests was second (24%), followed by moral obligation (18%) and contribution to development of developing countries (12.5%).

Figure 20. Why Provide ODA? (%)



There is an interesting divergence in opinion along ideological lines where progressives and conservatives differ as to how countries utilize ODA. The divergence was most pronounced when it came to national interest as the principal motivating factor for ODA with more progressives tending to see countries using ODA to promote national interest and increase trade rather than conservatives. The opinion was especially divided when it came to South Korea's motivation behind ODA, with more progressives thinking that national interest and duty as part of the international community was important while more conservatives highlighted the importance of the impact that ODA would have in maintaining peace and stability around the world.

Figure 21. Why Provide ODA? (by Ideology) (%)



Economic Development and Poverty Reduction in Developing Countries

Regarding the impact of ODA on developing countries, 74% agreed that it revitalizes the economy and reduces poverty in developing countries. 26% said that it does not.

Figure 22. Is ODA Helpful? (%)



The difference in opinion is most pronounced along ideological line, with 91% of conservatives tending to see ODA as being very helpful for the economic and poverty reduction while more progressives (43%) tending to think otherwise.

Figure 23. Is ODA Helpful? (by Ideology) (%)



South Korea's ODA Budget

When asked about South Korea's ODA budget, an overwhelming 99% of respondents agreed that it should either increase or remain the same (increase: 72%; remain the same: 27%). Only 1% of respondents argued that the budget should decrease.

Figure 24. South Korea's ODA Budget (%)



Optimal ODA Budget

In 2016, the average Korean paid around KRW 47,000 as part of South Korea's ODA budget. Respondents were asked to specify the optimal amount of ODA budget per capita. More than half (54.2%) of respondents answered that KRW 100,000 or more was the optimal amount. 28.1% answered that the optimal amount was less than KRW 60,000 although only 1.4% of respondents said they would pay less than the current amount.

Some interesting gender differences can be noted, with approximately 57% of men stating that KRW 90,000~100,000 per capita is the ideal level of ODA spending while approximately 59% of women think that KRW 47,001~60,000 per capita level is ideal.

Figure 25. Optimal ODA Budget (%)



Priority Regions for South Korea's ODA

More than half of respondents (57.5%) identified Southeast Asia (Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, etc.) as the priority region for South Korea's ODA. Another 28% answered that countries in Sub-Saharan Africa such as Congo, Uganda, and Tanzania should be the main target. Other regions included South Asia (5.5%), Middle East and North Africa (5%), Latin America (2%), the Caribbean region (0.5%), and the Pacific islands (0.5%).

Figure 26. Priority Region (%)



Role of NGOs and South Korean Government

Elites tend to envision different roles for NGOs and countries with regards to ODA intervention. For instance, when asked to identify specific areas of ODA policy in which international NGOs can have the greatest impact, education (73.5%) and health care services (67.5%) were the two leading areas followed by climate-related issue (42.5%) and human rights (42%).

When respondents were asked to identify areas in which South Korea can have the greatest impact with respect to their ODA policy, infrastructure (77.5%) was the leading area followed by health and medical service (69%), education (61%), and information technology (60.5%). Environmental (14%) and human rights (9.5%) issues received the least amount of votes.



Figure 27. Role of NGOs and South Korean Government (%)

Priority Policy Agenda for South Korea's ODA

In terms of South Korea's ODA policy agenda, more than half of respondents agreed that the priority should be placed on life free of infectious diseases (34.5%) and globalization of *Saemaul Movement* (22%). Others included technology-related agenda such as electronic government (13%) and science, technology, and innovation for better life (13%). At the same time, improving education in Africa (7%), clean energy

Figure 28. Priority Policy Agenda for South Korea's ODA (%)



infrastructure (4.5%) climate change/emergency relief in East Asia (4%), and providing better life for girls (2%) received less attention.

Ideological differences appear to matter, with progressives prioritizing infectious and communicable diseases (40.5%) along with technology (16.5%) being more important than the conservatives who prioritized *Saemaul Movement* (34.7%) and e-Government (17.3%).



Figure 29. Priority Policy Agenda for South Korea's ODA, by Ideology (%)

Most Successful International Institution or Nation in Providing ODA

When respondents were asked to identify the most successful international institution or nation as ODA provider, the United Nations received 45% of the votes. The United States and the European Union received 14.5% and 11% of the votes, respectively, followed by NGOs (11%) and international financial institutions (9%). Only 0.5% of respondents answered that South Korea was the most successful, trailing China (1.5%) and Japan (7.5%).



Figure 30. Most Successful International Institution or Nation as ODA Provider (%)

Most Successful Domestic Institution in Providing ODA

With the understanding that South Korea's ODA has not been as successful as other nations or international organizations, respondents were asked to identify the domestic institution that has been most effective with its ODA program. 55.2% of respondents agreed that government institutions were more successful followed by non-governmental institutions (32.5%), universities, hospitals, and specialized institutions (8%), and private enterprises (3%).



Figure 31. Most Successful Domestic Institution in Providing ODA (%)

Affinity Towards Philanthropic Experience

Respondents were asked if they have donated money/goods or volunteered in the past. 64% said that they have while 36% said the opposite.

Figure 32. Experience of Donation or Volunteering (%)



When respondents were asked to identify the type of donation or volunteering, 79% said that they have experience donating money. 29% answered that they have donated goods and 26% said they have volunteered. These figures are encouraging given that philanthropic activity has been relatively limited in South Korea. The Ministry of Health and Welfare, for instance, reported that only about 34.5% of South Koreans engaged in charitable giving during 2013.⁵ Overall share of population engaged in volunteer activities was holding steady at about 17.7% in 2013 as well. According to the Charities Aid Foundation, South Korea is ranked 77th out of the 140 countries in terms of overall charitable giving and maintains a CAF World Giving Index score of about 33%.⁶ The survey results show that the South Korean elites understand the value of philanthropy.

6. CAF World Giving Index 2016. Charities Aid Foundation. October 2016.

Jang YS, Go KH, Lee YH, Kim JH, Oh MA, Kang JW, Jin JH, and Hahm SY. 2015. *Report on Public Sharing 2014*. Policy Report. Korea Institute for Health and Social Welfare & Ministry of Health and Welfare.

According to respondents, NGOs (78.9%) were the biggest sponsor of donation and volunteering in South Korea followed by universities, hospitals, and specialized institutions (25%) and government institutions (20.3%).





Figure 34. Biggest Sponsor of Donation or Volunteering (%)



General Knowledge and Outlook on Developmental Issues and Institutions

Not surprisingly, the elites seem very well informed about general knowledge issues, such as ODA-related institutions. For instance, 82.5% of respondents answered that they were either 'very well-informed' or 'fairly well-informed' of KOICA (Korea International Cooperation Agency). International organizations such as UNICEF (77.8%), WHO (77.5%), World Bank (76.8%), and UNDP (74.7%) were widely recognized. 53.7% of respondents also answered that they were informed about the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Figure 35. General Knowledge about ODA-related Institutions (Percentages of 'very well-informed' + 'fairly well-informed') (%)



With respect to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), 77% stated that they were aware of these goals (23% said they were not). 70.5% of them also thought these goals were achievable while 20.5% did not.





Evaluation of Foreign Policies and ODA Policies of Past South Korean Administrations

On a scale of 0-100 (0=lowest; 100=highest), respondents were asked to evaluate the foreign policies and ODA policies of South Korea's past four administrations (Kim Dae-jung, Roh Moo-hyun, Lee Myung-bak and Park Geun-hye).⁷ In terms of foreign

Figure 37. Evaluation of Past Foreign Policies and ODA Policies (0=lowest; 100=highest)



7. This survey was conducted prior to the scandal involving President Park.

policy, President Kim received the highest score (75.4) followed by President Lee (69.2), President Park (66.3), and President Roh (65.5). In terms of ODA policy, the two liberal presidencies of Kim (63.3) and Roh (62.8) ranked higher than their conservative counterparts of Park (59.78) and Lee (58.7).

Future ODA Policy

Respondents were asked to comment on South Korea's future ODA policy. More than half (53%) stated that South Korea should keep its promise to increase aid. Another 42.5% agreed that South Korea should go beyond its promise and increase aid. Meanwhile, only 4.5% of respondents commented that South Korea should either maintain or reduce the amount of aid due to economic difficulties.

Figure 38. Future ODA Policy (%)



Conclusion

Regardless as to what anyone thinks about South Korea's ODA policy, critics and observers all agree that South Korea will continue to be an active member of the DAC. Recent DAC peer review, however, reveals that there is room for improvement. This study suggests, for instance, that the South Korean government can do more to raise public interest in ODA. One way to do this is by investing more energy and resources on previously ignored public relations channels such as the Internet/SNS and person-to-person contact.

After a leadership transition in 2017, there is likely to be some changes in South Korea's approach to its ODA policy. This study has shown that progressives have different priorities than conservatives when it comes to ODA policy. For instance, the progressives feel that ODA should focus more on health/medicine, energy, and economic crisis while conservatives emphasize the importance of tackling environmental problems and climate change. Progressives also tend to see ODA being used to promote narrow national interests while conservatives think ODAs should be used for promoting broader peace and stability. There is little doubt that policies on matters like ODA are not determined solely by the opinions of the general public and/or the elite policymaking community but it sheds an important light on domestic constraints which can shape the next administration's policy.

Irrespective of the government's political ideology, however, what South Korea lacks is a long-term strategic ODA policy. The focus should be on mobilization at the grassroots level. Policy communities and civil society networks can serve as the vehicles for generating sustained interest and organized participation. They can also be the lynchpin for developing public-private partnerships (PPP), which can be the basis for a more resilient and robust ODA policy.

Survey Methodology

Sample size: 200 experts in policy Survey method: Online survey using structured questionnaire Period: August 12-30, 2016 Organization: Research & Research

ASAN REPORT

The Giving Mind: Analysis of South Korean Public and Elite Attitudes on ODA

by J. James Kim, Choi Hyeonjung, John J. Lee, Kang Chungku

First edition January 2017

Publisher Hahm ChaibongPublished by The Asan Institute for Policy StudiesRegistration number 300-2010-122Registration date September 27, 2010Address 11, Gyeonghuigung 1ga-gil, Jongno-gu, Seoul 03176, KoreaTelephone +82-2-730-5842Fax +82-2-730-5876Website www.asaninst.orgE-mail info@asaninst.orgBook design EGISHOLDINGS

ISBN 979-11-5570-182-9 93300

Copyright © 2017 by The Asan Institute for Policy Studies

All Rights reserved, including the rights of reproduction in whole or in part in any form.

Printed in the Republic of Korea

THE ASAN INSTITUTE for POLICY STUDIES

BILL& MELINDA GATES foundation

