KOICA
Korea International
Cooperation Agency

Together KOICA

2020 vol.3

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2020
vol.3

Special Edition

COVID-19
Let's overcome it with KOICA!



The Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) is the representative organization for development cooperation in the Republic of Korea. KOICA was established in 1991 to support economic and social development in partner countries. Based in 44 offices around the world, KOICA offers a wide range of programs including national projects, development experience exchange partnership programs (DEEP), fellowship programs, overseas volunteer programs, multilateral cooperation, global disease eradication fund, public-private partnership program (PPP), development innovative program (DIP), humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

KOICA acts as a platform for national development cooperation through which various actors such as the government, public institutions, NGOs, companies, academia, and citizens. KOICA's development cooperation projects contribute to addressing various global issues including those on human rights, the environment, disease, and global poverty eradication.

Moreover, it contributes to win-win strategy between Korea and partner countries by laying the foundation for Korean companies to gain entry into global markets as well as by fostering Korean global talent.

As the representative agency for development cooperation in the Republic of Korea,

KOICA will achieve global social values leaving no one behind with people-centered peace and prosperity.



Together KOICA

2020 vol.3

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Kyrgyzstan's infinite possibilities blossom

Kyrgyzstan FabLab Bishkek

Kyrgyzstan is a landlocked nation in the northern part of Central Asia and is classified as a low-and-middle income country by OECD standards. Economic growth is slow here because natural resources are scarcer than in neighboring states, so the Kyrgyzstani government has made human resources development a top priority, while focusing on securing and developing new talent.
However, a job shortage here has prompted about a million people (10% of the population) to go abroad looking for employment. This human resource outflow is not easily preventable, as the country's education system and facilities are poor and inadequate for addressing the problem fundamentally.

Written by Nam Jiyeon **Photos by** KOICA

Space of knowledge for everyone

KOICA, along with Seoul International Friendship Organization (SIFO) and TIDE institute, is conducting a public-private partnership project (2019-2021) aimed at improving higher education through establishment of Kyrgyzstan FabLab Bishkek.

The Fab Lab is a space where anyone can come, like a public library, and create whatever objects and prototypes they want using digital manufacturing equipment such as 3D printers, laser cutters, vinyl cutters, CNC routers, table CNC machines, and Arduino, turning innovative ideas into commercially viable products. The Bishkek Fab Lab aims at raising opportunities for employment and starting businesses by offering training in digital manufacturing and spreading a technology-based maker culture.

A New Dream Starts at FabLab Bishkek

Ms. Begyaym, currently a third-year student at the Department of Architectural Design in Kyrgyz State University of Construction, Transportation and Architecture, has been participating in the Seminar on Electronic Prostheses at Fab Lab Bishkek since early this year. She is an Architecture major with many classes and much homework that requires hand drawing or using computers. However, her studies were hampered by a congenital disability. And then, she was selected as a participant in the Seminar on Electronic Prostheses and given the opportunity to make and practice wearing a prosthetic arm for use in manufacturing processes.

"I really wanted to participate in the workshop when I heard that I could build my own prosthetic arm. Thank you very much KOICA and Fab Lab, for providing such a great space and opportunity. Now I can grow my hair long, as it was very hard for me to tie it with one hand, and I'm looking forward to wearing short sleeves, which I used to hate because I couldn't hide my arm."

The space where the dream that you wanted becomes a reality

Bishkek will be a digital fabrication space to manufacture prototypes that meet Kyrgyzstan's domestic need. The goal is to create a standard operating manual to build a system that can operate locally on its own without the input of external personnel. To this end, support plans are provided for collaboration with experts and experienced people in makerspace operations and management, and also for prototype training and mentoring that could lead to actual start-ups.

We hope that the startups and great talents discovered at Fab Lab Bishkek will bring amazing events, and become a great driving force for the Kyrgyzstani economy.







Guaranteed Sustainable Health for Local Residents

Regional Healthcare Capacity Building Project in the Philippines

Located away from the hustle and bustle of the city, Bulacan, Philippines is a place where people have settled away from the urban area. The illnesses that plague the residents of Bulacan have driven the people into further economic destitution and deprived them of access to healthcare services. This is the reason KOICA has partnered with Seoul National University Hospital to help build capacity of the healthcare workforce in Bulacan.

Written by Lee kyounghee **Photos by** Camp Asia

Consistency is Key

"It's all about the people."

This is the first statement made by Professor Gyeongmin Lee from the Department of Neurology at Seoul National University Hospital when talking about his experience organizing the Regional Healthcare Capacity Building Project in Bulacan, Philippines from 2016 to 2018 alongside KOICA.

Located away from the hustle and bustle of the city, Bulacan, Philippines is a place where people have settled away from the urban area. The residents of Bulacan and especially those who have been forcefully relocated suffer from a wide range of illnesses and diseases owing to the lack of government healthcare services. To make matters worse, their access to information and treatment is extremely limited.

"It goes without saying that overseas development projects have their drawbacks, one of which would be that the series provided by foreign workers hampers local capacity building efforts. This is why regional capacity building is so important."

Professor Lee identified three criteria for the Regional Healthcare Capacity Building Project after numerous visits to Bulacan before initiating the project. First, whether the region in question needs this project. Second, the feasibility of the project. Third, whether there is an educational organization that can carry on the baton of education efforts and whether the organization is

committed to the effort.

Bulacan fulfilled all these criteria and the Regional Healthcare Capacity Building Project commenced in 2016.

Educating the local population makes a significant difference

The goal of project was clear cut. A long-term goal and short-term three-year goal was set. The long-term goal was to identify healthcare issues in the regional community and build a system that help strengthen people's capacity to deal with these issues. In an effort to achieve this long-term goal, a three-year master plan was carved out by KOICA and Seoul National University Hospital to create an education curriculum. Local residents participated in building this well-thought out curriculum.

Out of the 100,000 residents of Bulacan, a couple of thousands of people participated in healthcare education or activities, out of which the dozens of leaders received training. After joining in capacity building activities, these leaders go back to their respective neighborhoods and provide healthcare services to the residents, in essence transmitting the impact of the project to the entire population in Bulacan.

This begs the question about the level of education that was provided.

"Diagnosis is about providing information. Studies have shown that laymen are capable of diagnosing 80 percent of illnesses if provided with adequate information. We helped build their capacity to deal with the biggest social issues in the region, since people weren't equipped to solve these challenges despite the fact that 80 percent of healthcare issues can be taken care of by everyday residents. Why? Because they didn't know how. They didn't have the knowledge nor technical capabilities. It was vital that we break down these barriers."

Professor Lee's comments ring true with the healthcare



problems experienced by people in Bulacan.

The reason KOICA's project focused on chronic (non-communicable) diseases this time around is because non-communicable diseases or NCDs are the number one cause of social and economic strife, and declining quality of life.

Hypertension, diabetes, and obesity are among the most challenging non-communicable diseases that affect middle-income countries like the Philippines, because they lead to cardiac disease, cerebrovascular disease, and cancer, causing the mortality rate to climb and decline in productivity, which puts downward pressure on society as a whole.

"That is why building the capacity of healthcare workers was vital."

The impact of confidence and self-esteem

The impact of the Regional Healthcare Capacity Building Project was remarkable. The residents who participated in the education program at the National University of Bulacan were proud to become trainers and this was a strong driver for elevating the self-esteem of the trainees. In addition, this was one of the key success factors of the project that helped the residents become committed and gain confidence.

Professor Lee's statement that "overseas development projects tend to create a clear distinction between the people providing support and the beneficiaries, but it's extremely important to build a partnership so that the residents can gain the confidence required for problem-solving" speaks volumes.

The International Development and Cooperation NGO Camp's contribution was crucial as they acted as the bridge between the organizers of the project and Bulacan.

"Previously, capacity building projects were focused on the professional realm of training doctors. Attempts to encourage direct participation of the residents were almost unheard of. They were doubtful, because it had never been done before."

This is a quote from Cheolyong Lee, the CEO of Camp Asia. This project was made possible because of the strong support and trust Camp Asia has built over the past decade with the people in Bulacan.

"It's important that overseas development activities are carried out under a sense of global citizenship, viewing partner countries and recipient countries as equals. Projects that cater towards economic development or furthering the partner country's gain are bound to be short-lived. Cooperation on development must be based on partnerships."

Health tends to be considered as a luxury exclusive to people living in clean environments in developed countries. However, health issues should take precedence in underdeveloped countries, because they are impediment to economic development. Although this breakthrough project organized by KOICA,

Seoul National University Hospital, and Camp Asia was concluded in 2018, the effects of the Regional Healthcare Capacity Building Project lives on to this day, impacting the lives of people in Bulacan and helping create healthier communities.



Saved Tunisia's cork oak forest with Korean forest restoration technology

Pilot project for recovery and reforestation of cork oak forest

What should be the criteria when choosing wine? There are various methods such as country of origin, varieties, and vintage, but, interestingly, it is said that the level of the wine can be estimated even by looking at corks. This is because cork is more expensive than other finishing materials, so unless it is a premium wine, they do not use good corks. Then what is cork made of? The main material for cork is cork oak. Cork from cork oak has the best quality so it is widely used worldwide. However, the cork oak is said to be in danger of disappearing.

Written by Nam Jiyeon **Photos by** KOICA Tunisia Office



Save the devastated lungs of Tunisia

The regions of Ain Draham and Jendouba, also called as "the lungs of Tunisia" were originally lush cork oak forests. It presents 11% of entire Tunisian forests and plays a major role for Tunisia's natural environment.

In addition, the region has great socio-economic importance, such the region provides various forest products, such as cork production, as well as livestock farming base. The region is also responsible for the livelihood of the Tunisian residents.

However, recently, as forest deterioration and forest fires caused by cork production have led to rapid devastation of forests, the area of cork oak forests is decreasing every year. In such situation, Tunisians made various attempts such as planting and seeding to save forests.

However, due to the lack of related knowledge and skills, the restoration attempts fail every time. They were in a situation where they desperately needed the technological capability to save the forest and the synergistic effect to save the environment and the economy at the same time.



KOICA and Tunisia National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute (INRGREF), together with Suppro and SK Forest, started to restore the cork oak forest.

In Ain Saida, which had suffered wildfires in the past, renewal felling (cutting off existing trees to create a new stand) and planting are carried out.

Therefore, in the area of Ain Saida, which had suffered wildfires in the past, renewal felling (cutting off existing trees to create a new stand) and planting were carried out. Repetitive planting (replenishing planting at where plants died or went bad) and intensive watering (providing necessary water) were actively carried out. As a result, number of survival trees were increased.

The results of the business were successful. The average survival rate of cork oak reached 75%, and an outdoor growth facility capable of producing 65 million modern nursery seeds was constructed.

Also, stable seeds supply was enabled through establishment of sprinkler facilities and semi-automatic watering facilities. In addition, we provided training for nursery farm operation and created manuals so that the status could be maintained even after the project was over.

Forest restoration, Tunisia's first public-private partnership project

In addition to creating lush forest, there are other achievements. That is the role of Tunisian residents. Up to that point, residents played roles only as "laborers in the field." But this time, it was different. We not only sought the cooperation of local residents, but also carried out works in a way that residents participated in the project and led the project. From the project planning stage, we held project briefing session to explain the purpose, plan, and effects of the project to residents. Through the briefing essions, we fully communicated with local residents to help them understand the project and cooperate. Moreover, we helped local residents to be able to make major decisions together with government agencies from the project planning stage.

Restored dense cork oak forest

As a result of working with KOICA, Tunisia, which had failed to restore the forest every time they tried, could bring about meaningful results.

If efforts are continuously made to protect the watering and oak trees to withstand the hot, dry Mediterranean climate in the summer, lush cork oak forest will be restored as before.



Regaining Fresh Water with Traditional Water Supply System based on Wisdom of Ancestors

Integrated Rural Development for IDP Communities in Azerbaijan through Revitalization of Kahriz Water supply system

The Republic of Azerbaijan is facing a water shortage crisis after excessively using the country's water resources, which is more precious than gold. KOICA is trying its best to suture and resurrect the goose that lays golden egg in the country.

Written by Nam Jiyeon
Photos by KOICA Azerbaijan Office

Kahriz, Azerbaijan's 'goose that lays golden egg'

As we can see from the history that human civilization developed along waterways, water resources are essential to human. Since the ancient times, people irrigated water to villages from water supply sources. However, in arid or semi-arid areas, excessive use of water resources led to water scarcity in the community. Therefore, the Azerbaijani ancestors built 'Kahriz,' water supply system that irrigates water within a sustainable range, without using external energy sources.

Kahriz is an eco-friendly water supply system that is designed to collect underground water and deliver it through a culvert with a gradual slope. It is consisted of an underground water path with a well-like hole every certain distance. It uses the flow of underground water for irrigation and no additional fuel is required. The supplied water is used as drinking water, domestic water, and agricultural water.

However, since the 1960s, with the advance of technology, humans started to dig deeper wells or use modern technology such as motorized pumps to get water, and soon, Kahriz was forgotten from our minds. Excessive use of water resources led to decrease in the amount of underground water and drying of wells, and Kahriz, which required continuous management to ensure water flow, has been neglected by us and the system deteriorated.

Get back to basics!

After reviewing such circumstances in Azerbaijan, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) realized that the most optimized way to continuously supply drinking and agricultural water without depleting water resources or using external energy sources is to use Kahriz. Thus, since 1999, IOM has been implementing Kahriz rehabilitation projects in Central Asia and nearby arid and semi-arid areas. As a result, more than 163 Kahriz were restored for the past twenty years, supplying water resources to 20,000 households.

The projects were successful. 31,147 people from 6,246 households were provided with irrigation water, the area of irrigated land increased by seven-folds from 470ha to 3,525ha, and daily amount of water resources also increased by more than five times. Such achievements were recognized with the awarding of 'Energy National Award 2012.'

In 2018, based on such wonderful achievements, KOICA started the second project of its kind. The new version covers restoration of Kahriz after the establishment of a national masterplan, strengthening the skills of Kahriz engineers and technicians, maintenance of irrigation canal for displaced persons and rural communities, implementation of small-sized business establishment project to increase income of displaced persons, and expansion and promotion of Kahriz system.

Kahriz system, while guaranteeing the basic right for water to 30,000 displaced persons in Azerbaijan, also enhances accessibility to drinking water and increases agricultural productivity. Moreover, it is meaningful that Kahriz is an eco-friendly and economic technology which is also adaptable to the aspects of climate change and natural disasters in Central Asia. In addition, it also contains significance of restoring a unique cultural legacy of Azerbaijan.

The restoration of Kahriz, an Azerbaijani traditional water supply system, will contribute to enhanced quality of life of displaced persons suffering from water shortage, and support the socioeconomic development of its communities. KOICA will keep on going with its efforts to provide stable water supply in Azerbaijan together with IOM.





Korean Technology Supporting Social Distancing in Cambodia?

Cambodian e-Learning Platform Khmer Academy

Just like in Korea, the first country to delay reopening of school and start online classes, our neighbor country of Cambodia also implemented a temporary closure plan for schools. After the announcement on March 13, the plan was enacted on March 16, and with the worldwide outbreak of COVID-19, the measure is indefinitely prolonged.
Then, how are Cambodian students studying in these times of school closure?

Written by Nam Jiyeon
Photos by KOICA Cambodia Office

KOICA, You've got a Plan!

In 2013, KOICA, with Webcash Global, a fintech company, held 'Software Expert Training Program' in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, to strengthen ICT capability in the country through nurturing software experts. The program was initiated to establish a Software Human Resources Development (HRD) Center in Cambodia, since the country faced shortage of IT training infrastructure despite high interest and demand in the field, and to enhance its ICT capability.

Under the three objectives of 'training technical professionals,' 'training research professionals,' and 'supporting business establishment,' the HRD Center focused on nurturing experts. As a result, based on the efforts of those who completed training in the Center, Cambodia is showing achievements by lowering external dependence in ICT field, and furthermore, by planning its own projects.





And today, 'Khmer Academy,' an e-Learning platform developed during the first stage of SW Expert Training program, is supporting the implementation of social distancing measures during COVID-19 crisis in Cambodia.

In Cambodia, distribution rate of personal computers in households is low, and the environment is not suitable to use wired internet. However, the penetration rate of mobile internet is relatively higher, thanks to its affordable fees. The fact that 90 per cent of high school students in Phnom Penh are using smartphones proves it.

While considering such circumstances in Cambodia, Webcash Global developed a mobile app, through which students (usually from 7th to 12th grade) are using 'Khmer Academy.' In an environment equipped with wired internet, the program is accessible via YouTube.

KOICA, Taking Responsibilities for Cambodian Students' Education

Currently, Khmer Academy is providing math, science, physics, and chemistry lectures for 7th to 12th grade courses, and regular ICT training for students of all ages.

Khmer Academy is not a formal school education channel. It is optional for students and it only plays an assistive role. However, with schools closing due to the COVID-19 crisis, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport of Cambodia guided students to use Khmer Academy since March 20. As a result, the number of users increased by 13,000, from 177,000 early this year to 190,000 as of April. The number of daily users increased by more than two-folds, from about 200 to 500, and the number is still increasing.

According to Mr. Sok Tha from ICT department of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, 'School closure due to COVID-19 could be one of the main reasons why some students give up studying.

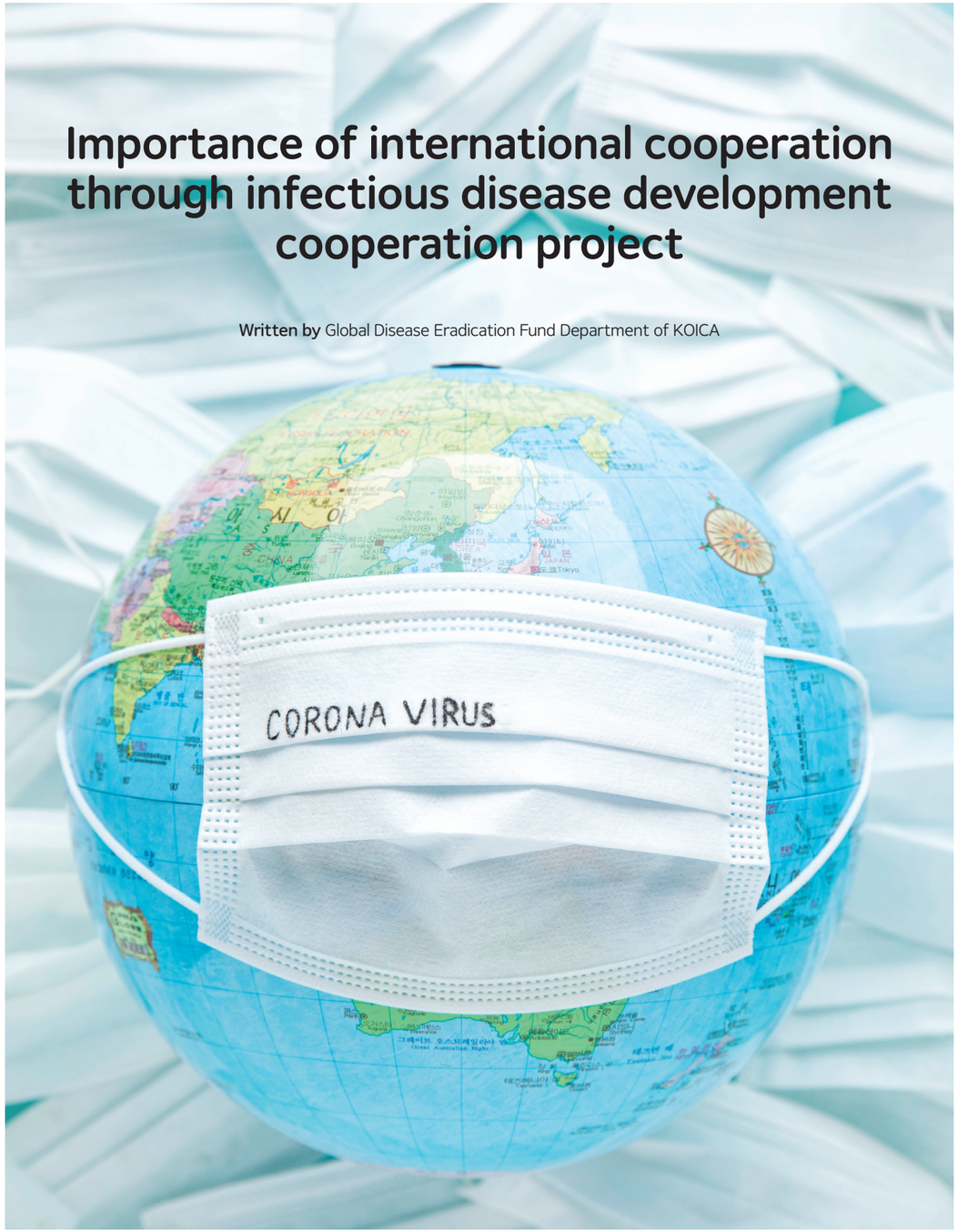
Therefore, e-learning in these difficult days is an important means for students to keep learning. And Khmer Academy is playing a huge role in this sense, because unlike other e-learning platforms, it provides lectures in Khmer language, and can induce students' interest in ICT and language classes.' In the upcoming future, KOICA Cambodia Office is planning to continuously cooperate with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport of Cambodia to provide guidelines, and maintain and manage Khmer Academy website with Webcash so that the e-learning platform could be used more widely in the country.

KOICA is supporting social distancing measures of our neighbor, Cambodia, and protecting global safety. To bring peace and ensure everyone's safety from the danger of infectious diseases, KOICA is working tirelessly.



Importance of international cooperation through infectious disease development cooperation project

Written by Global Disease Eradication Fund Department of KOICA







Coronavirus disease (hereinafter referred to as COVID-19), which was originated from China, has spread to Korea, East Asia, and Europe. It has developed into a pandemic, including over a thousand confirmed cases in Central and South America, located across the globe. The pandemic has driven the global communities into chaos and shock. Through the COVID-19 pandemic, the world has realized that infectious diseases not only affect a single country or region, and that they are an issue that needs to be addressed jointly by the international community.

The threat of new infectious diseases, such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) in 2003, and Ebola hemorrhagic fever in 2014, has increased across border. Accordingly, the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA) was launched joined by 30 countries, including the United States, and international organizations, such as World Health Organization (WHO), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and World Organization for Animal Health (OIE). GHSA is an initiative aimed at supporting international cooperation in the field of prevention, detection, and response to infectious diseases and strengthening capacity to respond to infectious diseases by country. It serves as a platform for the international community to jointly cope with health and security threats that cannot be addressed by the power of any one country.

Korea is a member of a steering group, which is composed of 10 countries of GHSA member states. Korea is leading the spread of the global health and security agenda with the Korea's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Currently, KOICA is operating the Global Disease Eradication Fund, commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The international poverty eradication fund, which was introduced as part of the innovative development fund in 2007 was transformed into an global disease eradication fund in 2017. Accordingly, the only Korean government fund aimed at combating international infectious diseases was created.

The Global Disease Eradication Fund supports the development of medicine / vaccines or diagnostic devices for new infectious disease, such as Ebola and MERS. The fund also supports activities to fight three major diseases including malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV. The Global Disease Eradication Fund is highlighting the importance of international cooperation in the global health sector by participating in discussions on infectious diseases with major global health sector partners, such as Global Fund, UNITAID, and GAVI.

The COVID-19 pandemic shows that the international community's joint response, based on transparent information disclosure and trust, is the only effective way to protect ourselves from the threat of new infectious diseases. Now is time to actively seek ways to assist underdeveloped countries to have an infectious disease response system at the level suggested by the International Health Regulations (IHR), while advanced health countries take initiatives in strengthening global health governance for international cooperation in the field of prevention, detection and response to infectious diseases.

COVID-19, let's overcome
it with KOICA!

KOICA's efforts to prevent and respond to the spread of COVID-19

As KOICA has been pursuing development cooperation projects to prevent and respond to various infectious diseases in developing countries whose medical health environments are in worse circumstances than that of Korea, KOICA has quickly responded to the outbreak of coronavirus disease-19 (hereinafter referred to as COVID-19), which is spreading at a fast rate worldwide.

Written by Nam Jiyeon **Photos by** KOICA



KOICA looking after the local community

Residents of Daegu city, Gyeongbuk province, and the surrounding local communities have been suffering from the turmoil of the outbreak. Thus far, we have delivered 4,000 masks and 400 hand sanitizers to 10 facilities for vulnerable groups in Daegu. This includes, providing support for residents of the poorest villages, homeless people, migrant workers, senior citizen who live alone, and adolescents who reside outside the conventional nuclear family home. Moreover, KOICA executives have donated approximately 20 million won to vulnerable groups.

In addition, in cooperation with Seongnam city, Gyeonggi province, KOICA opened the KOICA training center for those who have come into contact with COVID-19 patients and who have been targeted for self-isolation as well as for vulnerable people with difficult living conditions.

Moreover, in order to support activities to prevent the further spread and treatment of COVID-19 in Daegu and Gyeongbuk province, KOICA has also recruited World Friends Korea volunteers who have returned to Korea after completing their activities abroad. A total of 48 volunteers were recruited. On the 12th, Park Jung-mi, who previously volunteered as a nurse nursing in Peru, is currently serving at the KOICA Global Human Resources Education Center and was dispatched as the first volunteer in the nursing field.

Park Jung-mi shared her thoughts about being dispatched as a volunteer, stating "although I had a fear of facing an uncharted situation, the reason I decided to volunteer was because I had already experienced many unexpected situations during my time as a KOICA volunteer. No matter how thoroughly you prepare, unexpected situations, variables, or problems inevitably happen in the beginning. However, I could get courage as I tried to focus on how to respond to the situation and believed that I could overcome this through cooperation with colleagues."



KOICA looking after developing countries

Cases have been confirmed whereby KOICA's existing health projects have contributed to a partner's response to COVID-19. In Palestine, KOICA designated the Palestinian National Drug Addiction Rehabilitation Center, which was established in Bethlehem last January, as a hospital for the treatment of COVID-19 confirmed patients. While Palestine lacks government-wide large-scale health care and accommodation facilities, the center, which can accommodate large number of personnel and is equipped with basic medical facilities, served as a facility that possessed the optimal requirements to respond to COVID-19.

Currently, considering the global trend of the spread of COVID-19 and local health capabilities, the temporary return of KOICA volunteers is taking place sequentially for their own health and safety.

On the other hand, since last February, our medical volunteers dispatched to a wide array of partner countries have been conducting training on COVID-19 prevention measures and hand washing education as well as health campaigns for local residents, dispatched personnel, and overseas Koreans.

As such, we have continued our efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19. In addition, the remaining doctors volunteering overseas are working with embassies and legations abroad as well as KOICA overseas offices to ensure the safety of the personnel dispatched by KOICA, Korean citizens abroad, as well as citizens of developing countries.

The safety of partner countries is the safety of Korea

We are operating a grievance support channel to actively listen and find solutions to any unexpected difficulties of business partners, civil societies, volunteers, and citizens.

Overseas safety information, including the current state of COVID-19, is continuously updated on Facebook and the KOICA homepage to provide information to KOICA's dispatched personnel and partner organizations.

KOICA is conducting projects with the belief that 'we are safe when our partners are safe and our partners are safe when we are safe'. As global communities are closely connected, infectious diseases cannot be solved with the efforts of only one country or one person.

In order to establish a global response system in preparation for the emergence of new infectious diseases, KOICA will spare no effort to support the marginalized in Korea and to strengthen cooperation with the international community and partners of developing countries.

"Thank you, KOICA!"

K-Quarantine in Developing Countries

Written by Lee Hyeonsoo **Photos by** KOICA

Everything has pros and cons. With the advancement of transportation, such as automobiles, trains, ships, and airplanes, the world has become a one-day life zone, but grew weaker to the spread of infectious diseases.

Following the shocks of avian influenza, SARS, and MERS, Ebola outbreak struck West Africa before the COVID-19 crisis. Breaking out in Guinea in March 2014, Ebola spread out to the US, UK, Italy, and Spain, taking the lives of more than 10,000 people. Back then, Korea realized that it could be affected by healthcare security of Africa, located more than 10,000km apart, and focused on strengthening infectious disease response capacity of developing countries, based on the idea that 'your safety is my safety.' The first step Korea took was to participate in the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA) cooperation program. In 2014, the United States launched GHSA with fifty countries including Korea to prepare for the threat of infectious diseases, and promised to implement eleven tasks to enhance response capacity. KOICA, focusing both on its existing programs and GHSA, participated actively in international cooperation efforts, and led the process in improving infectious disease response system in developing countries. KOICA's support is becoming a ray of light for developing countries in these days of the COVID-19 crisis.



Cambodia
Preparing from the basics with systemic maintenance

In Cambodia, its core national systems are still vulnerable, and the poverty rate is high, due to twenty-years of civil war and prolonged poverty. The lack of national prevention-identification response system for infectious disease made it difficult to prepare for inflow of virus, and to identify confirmed patients.

To handle these issues, KOICA, the US CDC, USAID, and the Ministry of Health of Cambodia gathered. Support was provided to three areas in need of desperate improvement in terms of disease control, which were vaccination, health worker training, and national testing facility development. As a result, infants in 1,535 towns received vaccination, 69 epidemiological investigators were trained, and testing facilities in 28 state hospitals were upgraded, contributing to practical improvement of the system.

The 69 epidemiological investigators from 25 regions who completed the training courses are currently playing active roles in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic. These graduates are performing significant roles in holding infectious disease prevention training campaigns, collecting virus samples, developing major guidelines, and training health workers at the forefront. Mr. Sne Dyrang is a secondary nurse who has been working for five years in health promotion department in Kandal state healthcare bureau and is the only graduate of GHSA epidemiological investigator training program in the state. "Currently, I am investigating suspected cases and contacts in COVID-19 affected areas. Moreover, I am training rapid response officers on how to trace contacts. I am receiving high expectations and active support from Kandal state healthcare bureau and from the local communities, and I hope more investigators could be nurtured in this region through KOICA's continuous support."







Ghana
Epidemiological investigators actively working on the field!

Having experienced the Ebola outbreak in the past, Ghana realized the necessity of strengthening infectious disease management and response capacity in a national level and made it a national priority. Therefore, KOICA supported the country in improving its systems to enable early diagnosis of infectious diseases and to prevent them from spreading out.

In 2019, KOICA cooperated with CDC to encourage public officials from Northern part of Ghana to participate in a nine-month intermediate level epidemiological investigator program, held theoretical and field courses, and had completion ceremony. This was effective in responding to the COVID-19 crisis since its outbreak earlier this year. Currently, 14 out of 15 graduates are contributing to put an end to the pandemic by tracing investigations, managing data, and providing healthcare trainings. In addition, KOICA helped Ghana improve the environment of public healthcare labs, and in 2017, supported the establishment of Ebola Quarantine Center in Tamale, preparing for future outbreak of infectious diseases.

KOICA is planning to train 60 additional investigators in Ghana by 2023 to ensure that the country meets the international standard, and to let the investigators play their role in the field and swiftly respond in case of an outbreak.

Mr. George Akowuah, who participated in last year's intermediate level epidemiological investigator program and is in charge of healthcare information in Uppereast state local healthcare bureau, said that Ghana was able to respond to the current health crisis thanks to the program.

"The intermediate course of KOICA epidemiological investigator program was a huge help for me in developing capabilities related to analyzing epidemiological data, conducting scientific research and writing reports, and has become a foothold in my activities to address the crisis. Based on the knowledge I've learned, I am sharing international COVID-19 information related to Ghana domestically, checking for infections, delivering samples, preparing documents for samples, tracing routes of contacts, and producing case maps."

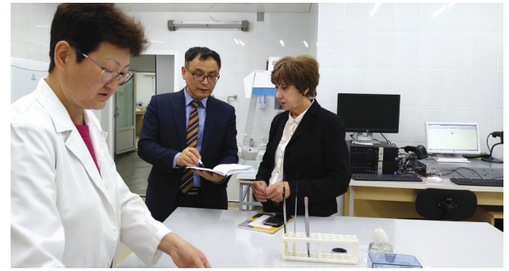
Uzbekistan
Introducing K-quarantine know-hows

Uzbekistan is also successfully protecting itself from the COVID-19 crisis thanks to the continuous improvement of infectious diseases response and international cooperation systems with KOICA.

KOICA has been supporting Uzbekistan prepare the basics to handle infectious diseases through the expansion of its management facilities, manpower, and infrastructure. KOICA held mid- to longterm epidemiological expert training courses to strengthen the management system of diagnosisepidemiological investigation-treatment-operation, and supported facilities prepare advanced equipment that could identify major infectious disease virus, significantly reducing the period needed for the diagnosis and analysis of microbes that could prevent the spread of diseases at early stages.

This has led to an outstanding result of eradication of malaria in Uzbekistan, and played a decisive role in preemptively protecting the country from the novel (COVID-19) outbreak early this year.

The dispatchment of an expert as a national advisor to the Uzbekistan government was especially an impressive move of KOICA. Last March, Uzbekistan requested dispatchment





of an expert, saying it was willing to learn K-quarantine know-hows, and KOICA responded by sending Dr. Jaewook Choi, a preventive medicine expert, as a policy advisor and consultant. Such an international cooperation was not only effective in addressing the spread of COVID-19, but also served as a chance to show us the spirit of solidarity.



COVID-19 outbreak hurts, but it gives us a lesson that a problem on the other side of the world could become a problem of mine. Under the premise that helping someone else ensures my safety, KOICA will continuously put efforts for the prevention and management of infectious diseases in developing countries. Moreover, KOICA will lead the world in addressing issues related to poverty, livelihood, education, and healthcare in those countries who have become ever more vulnerable due to the spread of infectious diseases.

COVID-19 Crisis Has Not Ended, Yet!

‘KOICA Global Doctors’ tell us COVID-19 stories around the world

The outbreak of COVID-19 crisis has put the world at risk. Developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to infectious diseases are desperately seeking for support from KOICA global doctors. Here, we will look at the current status in those countries and all the efforts to address the crisis from the viewpoint of KOICA global doctors.

Written by Nam Jiyeon **Photos by** KOICA global doctors

The Role of KOICA Global Doctors

KOICA global doctor is one of KOICA’s overseas dispatchment programs where Korean doctors go to parther countries to share their experience and technique contributing to the capacity building of its health workers and to the improvement in the quality of medical services.

Global doctors perform various tasks including training of health workers, health and safety management of other KOICA colleagues, and other activities to help develop the country’s healthcare and medical sector.

In the world suffering from the COVID-19 pandemic, KOICA global doctors are much needed, especially in developing countries. In countries lacking expertise in infectious diseases or adequate medical facilities, global doctors who understand the local environment well enough are responding to the COVID-19 crisis with given resources.



Sincerity and warm-heartedness are keys in becoming real friends

Byungchul Kim of KOICA Nepal Global Doctors



Dr. Byungchul Kim, who was dispatched to Korea-Nepal Friendship hospital in Thimi to share his expertise in colonoscopy and anal surgery in February 2017 through KOICA, was urgently assigned for COVID-19 response for KOICA colleagues and residents in Nepal during the early stage of the outbreak.

In Nepal, all suspected cases are designated to a national hospital specializing in tropical diseases, located in Kathmandu. Thus, patients are refused of diagnosis in their own region and are advised to visit Kathmandu. Due to such settings, the local medical staff are concerned that outbreak in local communities might lead to significant paralysis of the medical system in the whole country.

Dr. Kim is therefore not only responding to the crisis by himself, but also providing COVID-19 response training in cooperation with KOICA and Korean embassy in Nepal, and participating as an advisor during COVID-19 response meetings by Korean NGO leaders in Nepal and by the Korean embassy.

Dr. Kim, emphasizing that Korea, even though suffering from the crisis, is successfully controlling the virus, asked that we should provide support to other countries despite the remaining hardships in the country.

“Considering that people are concerned about insufficient response system in developing countries, if Korea leads the way in supporting others in these desperate times, it won’t just enhance Korea’s status but also be a precious opportunity to share the warm-heartedness of our people. Helping those who need help, even when you are also suffering, could be regarded as a gesture of sincerity. Supporting others and sharing your warm-heartedness makes you a real friend of the world.”







Now is the time when we need to pay back the support we received in the past

Changgyun Yoon of KOICA Ethiopia Global Doctors

Dr. Changgyun Yoon is an ophthalmologist who was dispatched to Ethiopia as a KOICA global doctor. At first, he was not sure what he could offer in addressing the COVID-19 crisis. Soon, Dr. Yoon collected as much data as possible on the virus and is responding to the pandemic together with Dr. Deokjong Ryu, a pulmonologist and a fellow KOICA global doctor in Ethiopia.

First, Dr. Yoon requested rapid testing kits to be supported and prepared drug guidelines. Since it was difficult to secure hydroxychloroquine in Ethiopia, which was announced to have effect on treating COVID-19, he rushed to secure chloroquine, whose effect was lower, but easier to get in Ethiopia, and has been used for malaria prevention for more than fifty years.

While K-quarantine is gaining attention in the world, it is difficult to apply Korean cases in Ethiopia, who is also seeking response measures for COVID-19, due to its low smartphone penetration rate, credit card usage rate, and internet distribution rate. Moreover, besides technological gap, there is a huge social and cultural difference between the two countries. In Ethiopia, it is usual to greet someone else for about five minutes, accompanied by handshakes, hugs, and kisses on cheeks, and family members consisting three generations live in a small house together and share and eat injera together with their hands. This is making it hard to implement social distancing measures in the country. That is why KOICA and the Ethiopian government are focusing on promoting COVID-19 prevention guidelines to local residents.

Dr. Yoon, who is responding to COVID-19 at the forefront of the epidemic, asked us to 'keep our composure for developing countries.'

"I hope we don't lose room for compassion to help African nations and developing countries in other continents who do not have adequate medical system, and therefore, have the risk of developing a huge number of confirmed cases. Ethiopians, in particular, came all the way to help us while risking their lives when our country was on the verge of breaking down during the Korean war. Considering all the support we received in the past, I hope we can lend a helping hand to other countries who are currently suffering."

Korea, leading and playing a huge role in the international community

Seungyoon Oh of KOICA Sri Lanka Global Doctors

Dr. Seungyoon Oh was dispatched to National Ayurvedic teaching hospital in Colombo, the capital city of Sri Lanka to teach local doctors and medical students. Since the outbreak of COVID-19, Dr. Oh is providing medical consultation, managing COVID-19 relief goods, and giving lectures on COVID-19 prevention while sharing with other global doctors the status and responses regarding COVID-19 in each country.

Sri Lanka, just like most of the world, has seen drastic increase in the number of confirmed patients since early March. To control the situation, it has implemented measures such as immediate lockdown and airport closure. Also, almost all hospitals except National Institute of Infectious Diseases reduced their operating hours. However, due to growing complaints about continued lockdown and for economic reasons, the government is lifting the measures. Still, individuals are wearing masks and following social distancing measures, contributing to social stability in the country.

The Korean government and its agencies cooperated with each other closely to ensure safety of Korean residents in the country.

Dr. Oh says that Korea is leading the world in many aspects and is at a position to help other countries.

"Korea is a model country in terms of addressing the COVID-19 crisis. Koreans cooperating with each other to overcome the crisis became an inspiration to people in other countries. Countries including Sri Lanka are hoping that Korea puts an end to the COVID-19 outbreak. They believe that Korea's success could be a beacon of hope for them. I know you are going through difficult times, but hope you reach the end with all the positivity you need."



"Protect Your Live" from the Virus

COVID-19 Prevention and Public Health Efforts in Peru

KOICA World Friends Volunteer Nurse Changhyeon Jang



Countries across the world are struggling to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Amidst these difficulties, Changhyeon Jang, a nurse working at the 4th Korea-Peru hospital in Huanuco, is spearheading COVID-19 prevention education efforts and public health campaigns and has become the talk of the town. Let's take a closer look at the story.

Written by Park Suin
Photos by Jang Changhyeon

Q Please introduce yourself.

I arrived in Peru in July 2018 and have been involved in health promotion and public health campaigns in Huanuco for the past 21 months.

Q Tell us about the healthcare system in Peru.

The healthcare organizations are divided into public and private. Public healthcare facilities are comprised of hospitals, healthcare clinics, community healthcare centers. Although the quality of medical service in Peru is quite good, the people rely mostly on public healthcare clinics because of the high medical fees. Healthcare clinics provide diagnosis, treatment, testing, and prescription services. They are not equipped to do surgeries. There are ten such healthcare clinics built by KOICA projects in Peru.



Q I've heard that you have been involved in education programs for preventing infections and public health campaigns in light of the rapid spread of COVID-19. Could tell us more about you work?

This is not my first experience with a communicable disease. I was serving as a medic during the MERS crisis in July 2015. We waged war against the disease - monitoring updates from the KCDC, checking the 200 plus troops for fevers, distributing individual masks and hand sanitizers, supplying people with pamphlets on keeping your hands clean and how to prevent infection, requesting consultations from the headquarters, just to name a few.

I believed that someone had to act fast in the face of the virus and started educating people with the posters I made in Spanish. In Latin American countries, people sometimes use their hands to eat, shake hands when greeting one another, and men and women greet each other with kisses on the cheek. In addition, the influx of foreigners from various different countries, exposes Latin America to different transmission pathways. This is why raising awareness to change people's perception about the public hygiene is critical. I created posters with the slogan "Protect Your Lives" and started educating people who are most vulnerable. I follow the latest updates from the World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Peruvian Ministry of Health, and the KOICA office. I also educate people about the six steps to washing your hands clean and good couch etiquette.

Q Tell us about the 4th Korea-Peru hospital pilot project that KOICA is focusing on..

The 4th Korea-Peru Emergency Medical System Improvement project is currently ongoing to help 52,555 local residents registered with our hospital. The aim of this project is to strengthen emergency medical system in order to provide public healthcare and medical services to more people. Around this time, the emergency room at hospital I was working at didn't have enough gates which made it hard to treat patients during the golden time and the hospital was severely short on medical tools, equipment, and facilities. I reported this to the KOICA office and applied for a pilot project to improve emergency medical services. After discussing this with KOICA headquarters, they decided to go ahead with the project.

Q What is most rewarding about your work as a volunteer in Peru?

I've educated seniors aged 65 and above about preventing chronic diseases. Whenever I run into the seniors who participated in our classes, they tell me that they are putting into action what they learned. I see the local community improving and I feel as if I'm becoming a better person right alongside them. Celebrities like BTS and star athletes like Heungmin Son represent Korea and introduce Korea to the world. I am also working hard to spread our culture to others and make Korea proud. By providing support to K-pop events and Korean language classes, building a Hanok ER, and wearing traditional Korean clothes to fashion shows I hope to highlight the best that Korea has to offer.

Addressing the COVID-19 Crisis in Rwanda with Skills Learnt through KOICA Global Fellowship Program

Dr. William Rutagengwa, Director General of Nyamata District Hospital, Rwanda

Dr. William Rutagengwa, who visited Korea and completed KOICA-Hanyang Master's Degree Program in Global Health & Development (National Health Policy) in 2014, is working hard in Rwanda's public healthcare sector as an expert of infectious disease. Let's invite Dr. Rutagengwa, Director General of Nyamata District Hospital, to talk about the current status of COVID-19 in Rwanda, and what KOICA is doing in the country.

Written by Nam Jiyeon **Photos by** KOICA, William Rutagengwa



Q Nice to meet you, Dr. Rutagengwa!

Nice to meet you. My name is William Rutagengwa. I'm the director general of Nyamata District Hospital. From 2014 to 2015, I participated in Master's Degree Program in Global Health & Development for National Health Policy.

Q What is the status regarding COVID-19 outbreak in Rwanda?

Until now, it seems like the outbreak is well controlled under the management of the government.

Just like in Korea, Rwandans are following preventative measures such as mask wearing, social distancing and hand washing. As the government is fully supporting the healthcare sector, it is possible not only to diagnose patients but also trace and treat confirmed patients. Nevertheless, as the pandemic is not expected to end soon, more support and response strategies regarding COVID-19 is essential.

Q What are tour roles regarding COVID-19 response in Rwanda?

When the first confirmed patient was diagnosed in our hospital, the first national quarantine facility was established in the city of Bugesera, and I was at the site leading the COVID-19 TF team. Later, the quarantine facility was transformed into a treatment center, and I'm still leading the overall activities regarding COVID-19 in our city. That includes improving community's perception to prevent COVID-19, tracing travel routes of confirmed patients, and running tests on suspected cases. This role is identical to all director generals of national hospitals in Rwanda.

Q How are you cooperating with KOICA regarding activities related to COVID-19 prevention?

When the Rwandan government asked for strong cooperation of governmental and non-governmental agencies, and domestic and international organizations to prevent and control the spread of COVID-19 in Rwanda, KOCIA also answered our call. KOICA recently donated 2,500 facial masks, 220 hand sanitizers, 70 thermometers, and 2,500 medical gloves to Rwanda Biomedical Center (RBC)* in urgency. And during a meeting hosted by the minister of health, KOICA promised to continue providing diverse medical support to Rwanda.

*Rwanda Biomedical Center (RBC): An organization under the Ministry of Health of Rwanda. Just like the Centers for Disease Control in Korea, RBC handles the responses regarding infectious diseases including COVID-19, AIDS, and Ebola, etc.

Q In 2014, you participated in KOICA-Hanyang Master's Degree Program in Global Health & Development (National Health Policy) and completed the course. Could you tell us how helpful was it to you?

My relationship with KOICA that started in 2014 is meaningful for me, too. As a fellow of the scholarship program, I completed the Master's Degree course in National Health Policy, and was able to acquire expertise on public health that suits the international standard.

Through the course, I was able to understand various knowledge regarding national health policy, and it served as a great help in performing my work here in Rwanda. My capabilities also advanced a lot, and I had the opportunity to be a director general in three different hospitals during the past five years. I will keep on cooperating with KOICA and perform my role to overcome the COVID-19 crisis in Rwanda.

As our fight against the COVID-19 will not come to an end soon, Rwanda is also planning to establish response strategies in diverse viewpoints. We will continue learning Korea's innovative quarantine system and infectious disease control cases through KOICA and contribute to overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic in Rwanda.

I believe that if we put our full efforts together, we will be able to address the COVID-19 outbreak. I would like to send my deepest gratitude to countries around the world, especially to KOICA and the people of Korea who did not hesitate to support us.



Introducing Senegal's COVID-19 Campaign with Aspects of Oral Tradition



Amadou Hampate Ba, a scholar of African folklore, once said that 'Whenever an elder dies, a library burns down.' This highlights the importance of oral tradition in Africa. In West Africa, griot, 'a legacy manager,' is a repository of oral tradition, and KOICA Senegal Office will introduce us the background of Senegalese oral tradition and campaigns to raise awareness and overcome the COVID-19 crisis, implemented by its hip-hop artists who have a lot in common with griots.

Written by KOICA Senegal office Lee Sangeun YP

Griot, The Root of Senegalese Oral Tradition and 'Living Library'

In the past when writing system was not fully developed in West Africa, griots played a pivotal role in preserving a community's historical and cultural identity by passing down its stories from mouth to mouth. Historically, griots usually existed in West African kingdoms with centralized system, served as an advisor for kings and other leaders, delivering knowledge, and facilitated social integration and rightful governing of leaders by collecting public's opinion or sending out positive messages to communities. Griots, however, did more than serving as an advisor, and played a role as a legacy manager who transferred a tribe's joy, anger, sorrow, and pleasure (birth, marriage, death, etc.) through performance arts including music, dance, and story.



©African Griot Summit in New York, 2012
Photo-splintersandcandy.com

Griots and Hip-hop Culture in Senegal

With the development of writing system, griots' enormous role as an oral historian gradually diminished, compared to the past. However, today, griots once again expanded their presence on stages including concert halls and clubs, not only in West Africa but in the world as artists, actively working as social facilitators who unravel political, social and cultural stories via lyrics or acting.

The successors of Senegalese oral tradition, represented by griots, still work as historians in their communities. However, today, some integrated with western culture, and sought career in pop music. As these musicians tell stories of a society through music to deliver messages, and pass them down to the next generations, it is easy to assume that there is something in common between griots and current Senegalese hip-hop artists.

Senegal's Campaign to Overcome the COVID-19 Crisis, with Aspects of Oral Tradition

In early 2020, Senegal, just like the whole world who is facing rapid outbreak of the COVID-19 crisis, announced state of emergency. In these dire times, Senegalese hip-hop musicians are integrating aspects of West African oral tradition with hip-hop to deliver Senegal society the messages of hope to overcome the pandemic. Of course, the lyrics are not exactly the same from a song to another, but still, all the songs are emphasizing the importance of washing hands, wearing masks, limiting travels, and implementing social distancing to prevent spread of COVID-19, and sending messages of courage and hope that soon Senegal will be able overcome the crisis.

Endless Efforts of KOICA Senegal Office to Address the Crisis

Meanwhile, KOICA Senegal Office is also putting endless efforts in various areas to support Senegal in addressing the COIVD-19 pandemic. In healthcare field, in addition to its original maternal and child healthcare system strengthening program, it introduced new programs and is transmitting public service announcement via radio regarding COVID-19 prevention, supporting sanitary goods, managing public healthcare centers and quarantine facilities in Fatick and Kaolack regions. Moreover, on Tuesday May 12, to support the vulnerable who are suffering from severe damages due to COVID-19, it delivered groceries and sanitary goods to 164 households in Dakar and four nearby towns of Gueule Tap e, Ouakam, Pikine, and Guediawaye via ALASCO, a KOICA trainee's alumni.

We hope that messages by Senegalese hip-hop artists to overcome the COVID-19 crisis and KOICA Senegal Office's support could be beacons of hope for Senegalese communities, and wish the pandemic comes to an end as soon as possible.



Former Deputy Minister of Mine and Energy Leads the South American Association of KOICA Fellows!

President, South American Association of KOICA Fellows and APEBECO

Guilermo Shinno Huamani

According to the Peruvian Customs Office, minerals are the number one export item Peru, accounting for more than half of total exports. We interviewed Guilermo Shinno Huamani, who previously served as the Deputy Minister for Energy and Mines and is currently the President of the Peruvian Association of KOICA Fellows, to talk about his experience with Korea and future plans.

Written by Lee Hyeonsoo **Photos by** Won Sanghee



Q It's good to meet you. Please introduce yourself.

My name is Guillermo Shinno Huamani and I am the President of APEBECO. I have worked in the energy and mining sector my entire life and was appointed as the Deputy Minister of Energy and Mines (MINEM) for a fiveyear term. I was also elected as the President of the Peruvian Association of KOICA Fellows (APEBECO) in June last year and am keeping myself happily busy every day.

Q When and how did your relationship with KOICA begin?

My first visit to Korea was in June 2010. My trip was for a safety workshop in mining that was hosted at Taebaek, Gangwon-do Province. The workshop was full of useful information. The information was vital for someone like myself who has worked 23 years overseeing private companies' compliance of mining and safety regulations and legislating public policy.

Afterwards in October 2018, I visited Gwangju to participate in BIXPO, where the latest updates about energy transformation was provided. I think my trips to Korea was a strong driver that led up to this point of serving as the President of APEBECO.



Q Could you tell us about APEBECO activities in Peru?

In June last year, APEBECO organized a "Plant Trees" campaign with 20 members. And in August to September, we worked on purifying our rivers. About 65 people participated. We also plan on expanding our work to include educating children from impoverished families, protecting women from domestic violence and sexual abuse, and much more.

I am proud of our hardworking members, but we still have a long way to go. There are 1,070 members in total who have participated in KOICA workshops in Korea, which means the participation rate is extremely low.

Q What are your plans moving forward?

In the past, APEBECO had a large number of inactive members. There was little to no activity and we weren't going anywhere. The Head of the KOICA Peru Office and I are aligned in our goal to encourage membership participation. There are two measures we have in store. First, is to encourage existing members to participate. This requires a full and accurate membership register. We are currently in the process of identifying each and every person who has participated in KOICA workshops by enlisting the help of government departments.

Second, is to attract new members. We need new members who recently took part in workshops in Korea and are motivated. Together, we plan on collecting waste from oceans and streams and providing support to those most in need.

Q I heard you were elected as the President of the South American Association of KOICA Fellows just one hour before we sat down here for this interview. What do you have planned as your role as President?

I am elated, but also feel a heavy weight on my shoulders. In fact, this meeting was extremely informative and reaffirmed the disparity among different countries. We had a wide range of representation from countries that receive the full support of KOICA, countries where KOICA does not have an overseas office, and countries with active participation and minimal participation. Each country also has different goals, which means that mediation will be crucial for our projects. If the five South American countries come together and pool our resources, I believe we can achieve great things through volunteer partnerships aimed at providing support to those in the margins of society and most in need in South America.



Paraguayan Alumni President
who fell in love with Korea

Bibiana Maria Lando Meyer

"I fell in love with Korea after visiting the country for the first time. I became interested in Korean history, music and dance, and now I am a BTS fan (A.R.M.Y.)!" Paraguayan KOICA Alumni President Bibiana Maria Lando Meyer beamed after wittingly introducing herself as a half-Paraguayan, half-Korean.

Written by Lee Hyeonsoo **Photos by** Won Sanghee

Q Hello! Please introduce yourself.

Hola! Hello, I'm Bibiana Maria Lando Meyer, president of the Paraguayan Alumni chapter. I'm a systems developer and also a professional journalist with two TV programs and a radio program. At the same time, I work as the president of KOICA's alumni association and volunteer for the Red Cross, so my life has been hectic lately. Sometimes all those responsibilities are pressing me, but I mostly enjoy it, because I often feel the joy and energy of doing everything I like at the same time.

Q How did you get involved with KOICA of Korea, which is located on the other side of the globe?

As a systems analyst, I first came to Korea in 2009 for an e-government training supported by the Paraguayan central government. At that time, I attended Kookmin University on a scholarship with the intention of helping to improve transparency in government processes and eradicate corruption in Paraguay. Since then, I have been fascinated by Korea and maintained my connection with Korea. So, I was excited and happy as if I had returned home during this visit.

Q What surprised you the most you first came to Korea?

Korea was my first Asian country I ever visited. I experienced culture shock, mainly because Korean and Paraguayan ways of life are exactly opposite. The first thing that surprised me was how Koreans deal with time. While we are rather flexible about time in Paraguay, Koreans keep it punctual. In addition, I felt that there were many unfamiliar things about Korean life that differed from living in Paraguay, but unique charms still attracted me. So, I fell in love with Korean history, music and dance. In short, I fell in love with Korea. I'm into BTS these days. (Laughs)



Q What kinds of activities is Paraguayan alumni association(APABECO) pursuing in Paraguay?

We are engaged in various activities for regional development and community service. Among them, I would like to mention volunteer work at an addiction prevention center in , Paraguay's capital. As it is well known, drugs pose a serious problem in Paraguay, especially among teenagers. We offer toys, books, outdoor sports equipment, furniture, and do volunteer work to help get young people, aged 6 to 18, off drugs. It has already been 2 years since we started this program.

One of the most memorable things we've done recently was an event to promote Korean culture in Paraguay. Last November and December, we held Korean Culture Day to help educate the public. I made large amounts of kimchi, bibimbap, kimbap, and bulgogi, and had a great time eating them with kids.

Q Please share what you gained from this 8th Reunion of Alumni Presidents in 2020 and what you expect in the future.

This was a meaningful event where leaders energetically shared opinions and pledged continued cooperation with Korea. It was great to be able to finalize the 2020 plan through this meeting, and I hope we will continue to convene going forward. This year, as last year, we are planning three workshops and a fair called Expo Korea in Paraguay. Among the many aspects of Korean culture, we will focus on food this time.

Living history of
KOICA Vietnam office,

Ms. Ha Ngoc Thuy, deputy department head

"Are all staff members in local KOICA offices Korean?"
"It certainly is not!" Then, what kind of job do the local staff members do? Here at KOICA Vietnam office, is a hardworking member who is a model to others. Let us meet Ms. Thuy who is now contributing to improving relationship between Vietnam and Korea as a KOICA staff.

Written by Nam Jiyeon **Photos by** KOICA Vietnam office



Q Nice to meet you, Ms. Thuy!

Hello. My name is Ha Ngoc Thuy from KOICA Vietnam office. I joined the office in February 2002, and I have been working here for 18 years. It is nice to meet you, too.

Q Would you briefly introduce us KOICA Vietnam office?

Since it's opening in 1994, KOICA Vietnam office has been supporting development cooperation programs in diverse sectors such as vocational training, rural and urban development, climate change response, public administration, water management, and healthcare and hygiene to promote economic and social development in Vietnam for the past 26 years. Through such programs, conditions in many vulnerable areas in Vietnam have been improved, contributing not only to local but also national economic and social development in Vietnam.

KOICA is where I can show my full capability!



Q What is your job at KOICA Vietnam office?

I am in charge of supporting new project discovery, monitoring projects related to public administration and water management, and Korean-Vietnamese interpretation, etc.

Q You translated Korean drama subtitles, contributing to the so-called Hallyu (Korean wave) in Vietnam. How did you start translating subtitles for K-dramas?

Well, my relationship with KOICA started with this. In 1999, when I was in my third year in my university, there was a Korean teacher who taught me Korean, who was a KOICA volunteer worker. One day, teacher offered me a chance to translate subtitles for a Korean drama titled 'Cinderella.' Since then, I have translated about 200 K-dramas that were aired nationally in Vietnam for about 10 years until 2009. Some of the most representative dramas I translated include 'Glass Shoes,' 'Tomato,' 'Autumn in My Heart,' 'Love Story in Harvard,' and 'Jewel in the Palace.' I was able to enhance my Korean skill and expand my understanding on Korea while translating K-dramas.

Q We would like to know how you joined KOICA Vietnam office.

Well··· Actually, I was about to join a large conglomerate in Seoul, and I was getting ready to go to Korea. I was waiting for my Visa when the Korean teacher I mentioned above contacted me saying that KOICA Vietnam office was looking for a Vietnamese who could speak Korean. I thought it would be a good opportunity to experience the working environment before working in Korea and decided to work at KOICA office for a short term. However, when I started working, I realized the job was perfect for me since I wanted to contribute to the development of local community. So that was how I joined this office and have been working here for 18 years to this moment in 2020. It was a great honor for me to have worked with a total of eight different chiefs and accumulate diverse field experiences.

Q Last question. Any words you want to share with the readers?

I am hugely honored and fortunate to have worked for 18 years in KOICA Vietnam office and contribute to promoting relationship between Korea and Vietnam. Even though KOICA development cooperation projects are under difficult circumstances due to the spread of COVID-19, I believe it is my duty as a member of KOICA officer to find tasks I could handle and contribute to overcome the difficulties. I would like to try my best in that sense. I will work hard with my fellows in KOICA Vietnam office to make the world a better place. Thank you.

For All Those who are Forced
to or Willingly Staying Indoors

<Together KOICA> introduces films from the third world

We have brought you films that are more movie-like than movies, and documentary films that are more realistic than reality. These are the films dealing with stories from the third world, which you might miss without a specific interest. They are not just for pass-time. These films will touch your heart and induce many thoughts.

Written by Nam Jiyeon



For Sama (2019)

Documentary | 23 Jan 2020 | UK
96min | Certificate 15
Directors Waad Al-Kateab, Edward Watts
Stars Waad Al-Kateab, Hamza Al-Khateab, Sama Al-Khateab



<For Sama> is a love letterfrom a young mother to her daughter 'Sama,' who is born in Aleppo, a city full of death and explosion due to the civil war. Waad Al-Kateab, the director and mother of Sama, leaves a message to her daughter telling why she remained in the city, and what she fought for.
This documentary, in a form of a letter delivered to a daughter by her mother, eliminates the cliche of civil war and calmly draws the reality. The audience can feel the pain of the characters suffering from civil war, and sees it that it is a miracle to see this film be released and meets its audience.
This film not only one the Golden Eye in the 72nd Cannes Film Festival, and Special Jury Prize in Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival, but also became the first winner of the British Independent Film Award as a documentary film, and drew much attention worldwide with its's title as 'winner of 62 Awards.'

Roma (2018)

Drama | 12 Dec 2018 | Mexico
135min | Certificate 15
Director Alfonso Cuaron
Stars Yalitza Aparicio, Marina de Tavira



Roma, the winner of Best Achievement in Directing, Cinematography, and Foreign Language Film of the Year in the 91st Academy Awards, is set in Roma, Mexico City and follows the viewpoint of a young maid of a middle-class family named Cleo.
This film shares conflicts and social oppression a family faces under the political turmoil in Mexico during 1970s. Women, who were regarded to be vulnerable, shares each other's scars and grow together.
It is known to be an autobiographical story of the director during his youth. It holds stories of various classes including a lady who has to raise four children without her husband, young kids who are not skilled for anything, and native residents who are left under the category of low-class. It is a beautiful story that gazes the oppressed who are suffering from pressures but still growth together in solidarity under the name of a family.

Capernaum (2018)

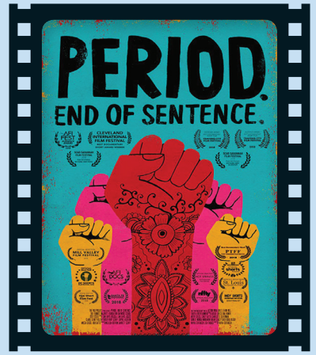
Drama | 24 January 2019 | Lebanon, etc.
126min | Certificate 15
Directors Nadine Labaki
Stars Zain Al Rafeea, Yordanos Shiferaw



A kid filed a complaint against his parents. What is the story behind this boy? 'Zain,' a 12-year-old boy born in a slum in Beirut, Lebanon, is sentenced years behind bars for wielding a knife in anger after hearing the news that his little sister lost her life. Zain's exact age nor status could not be identified since the parents did not registered his birth. The film follows the life of Zain, who lives an unfortunate life where basic human right as a child is neglected under violence of irresponsible parents. The film is more realistic than reality. It is not just a fictional story. It depicts the current situation in Lebanon, in which numerous children like 'Zain' are living.
This documentary has won the Jury Prize in the 71st Cannes Film Festival, the Audience Award in the 48th Rotterdam International Film Festival, and the Best Screenplay Award in the 29th Stockholm International Film Festival.

Period. End of Sentence. (2018)

Documentary | 2018 | US | 26min
Director Rayka Zehtabchi



In Hinduism, women are considered unclean during menstruation period, and are locked in their rooms or are kicked out of their own home. A rural town near Delhi also considers menstruation blasphemous, and its residents do not even think about spitting the word out of their mouth. The basic rights of women here are violated. They can not get sanitary towels, therefore have to stay in the house, and girls can not even go to school. They also face health issues. However, the situation is unlikely to be addressed, leaving them under constant pressure. One day, a machine to manufacture sanitary towels is installed in the town. The women learn how to use it, sell the products they made to achieve economic self-reliance, changing their life actively. It is a short documentary envisioning women who overcome pressures coming from menstruation, a natural status, and pioneer their life actively.

"Falling in Love is not a Sin!!!!"

Understanding the 'World of the Married' through Different Marriage Customs around the World

Written by Nam Jiyeon





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Get out of the room!

Ancient Arabic women were confident in a relationship and marriage. They had the right to choose their husband, and therefore, made their own marriage proposals or asked for a divorce. Sometimes, the husbands had to live with the in-laws, making the wives the opinion leader of a family. It was the wives who could ask for a divorce, and get custody of their children. Back then, wives turned the entrance of their tent the other way around as a sign of wanting a divorce. For example, if the original entrance was on the east side, it was turned around to the west side. Then, the husband would realize that he has been divorced by his wife, and keep himself from returning to the tent. However, as the Islam grew strong, and as a result of endless war, concubinage rose in the society, degrading the status of women.



What is a 'Small-scale Polygamy?'

In the traditional Rwandan society, monogamy was more prevalent than polygamy. Unlike other African nations that allowed as much as 50 wives for a man, Rwandans preferred a 'small-scale polygamy' system that allowed only up to 4 wives per man. Not only that, a 'consecutive polygamy,' where a man found another wife after leaving the original wife, was more usual than a 'simultaneous polygamy,' where a man would marry two or more wives at the same time. However, as single women's awareness on labor, economic system, education transformed through time, and as the country encourage protection for its people and liberation of women, polygamy is forbidden by law in today's Rwanda.



Would You Like a Cup of Salt Coffee?

In Turkey the legal age for marriage is 17 or above. However, early marriage still exists in rural communities under the decision and approval of the head of household. However, in cities, the average age for marriage is increasing since more and more are willing to complete university, end military service term, and seek stable job before getting married. In addition, younger generations tend to prefer love marriage than match-making, and decide their future plans by themselves. Still, arranged marriage is taking place quite frequent in Turkey. Usually, it is the husband's family that chooses the bride and makes proposal. This is when 'Turkey coffee' custom comes in. The bride-to-be serves Turkish coffee to the guests. When the future husband is below expectation, she puts a lot of sugar or sometimes, salt rather than sugar, in the coffee.



Love Affair, Not Guilty in Senegal!

Senegal is the country where polygamy is legal and the most prevalent among African nations.
In the past, polygamy was implemented due to religious reason and to gather labor force. Under polygamy system, women and children were considered to have special economic value who provide labor force. Moreover, as 90 per cent of population are Muslim in Senegal, it is highly unlikely for young women to refuse getting married since not getting married and having no children is considered a social disgrace. This is why most Senegalese women get married before they turn 20. As boys in the same age group are economically unprepared, Senegal's polygamy system is focused on older men with more assets.



Women, the Sources of Life

In Madagascar, folk religion affected its people to accept polygamy system. In the country, polygamy is based on the religious belief that women are 'the sources and owners of life.' Therefore, it was believed that the more sources of life exist in a group, the more likely it is to thrive. And polygamy system was the means to increase the number of sources of life in the group. All children born from different mothers were considered siblings as long as they shared the same father, and had to pay respect to him. Today, however, there is controversy on whether polygamy is necessary based on the reason that it threats cohesion of family, and that it is based on an obsolete tradition. With the development of society and due to economic burden, polygamy is now in the process of disappearing in the country.



Throwing Eggs is a Gesture of Blessing?

Muslim men in Egypt can marry four wives in principal, but most of them tend to marry only one. Since supporting diverse wives puts high economic burden on the husband, only the rich are able to afford it. As Egyptian men have a lot to prepare in order to get married, they tend to get married in their 30s. Whereas, women get married at relatively younger age, and the age gap between husband and wife is quite large in Egypt. In Egypt, those who are 21 or above can get married without content of parents. It is true that more couples are getting love marriage recently, but still, arranged marriage is more common. After getting married, giving birth to a child is considered as the number one priority. In some regions, people throw eggs to brides, wishing them to have many children just as hens bear a number of eggs.

There are countless delicious chocolate-flavored snacks around the world.
In fact, there are so many that we can not even dream of tasting every single snack.
That is why <Together KOICA> has tasted and evaluated sweet chocolate snacks from all over the world on your behalf.
You won't fail if you follow our recommendations. Then, why don't we take a look at various snacks
from different countries to enjoy all the sweetness?

Written by Kim Yeongju

World Snack Special

In Search of Delicious Chocolate-flavored Snacks Worldwide!



Malaysia
Chocolate Cream Cookie

Chocolate keeps falling ooout. Heat it up, and it will taste better. You might want to stop after learning how much calories it contains. It's the devil's cookie.



Indonesia
Nissin Wafers Chocolate

Far from excessive packaging! Cost-effective! Packages are full of wafers. Chocolate flavor is a bit weak, though.



Malaysia
Lexus Chocolate Cream Sand

The perfect combination of sweet and salty! But maybe, could've been better if added with a little more chocolate flavor?



India
Yummy Chocolate-flavored Biscuit

Not too sweet, but people tend to either love it or hate it.
For biscuit fans, we recommend you give it a try!



Indonesia
Gery Cracker Chocolate

Gery cracker, delicious as told! Still, original Gery fans prefer 'coconut' flavor.

BONUS

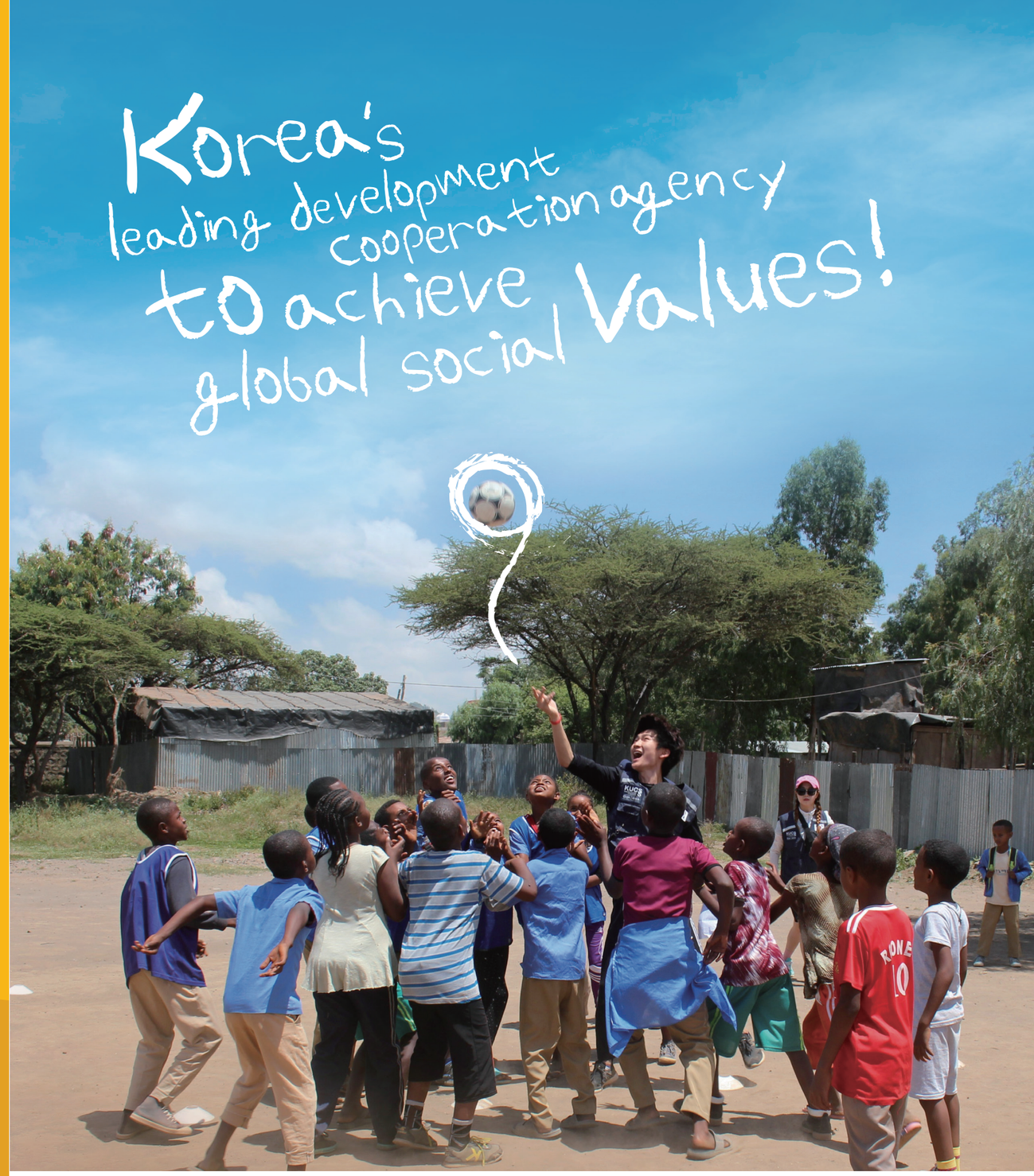


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